MINHAJUL ABIDEEN

THE BEST WAY FOR THE WORSHIPPERS

COMPILED BY
IMAM ABU HAMID MOHAMMAD AL-GHAZALI (RAH)



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MINHAJUL 'ABIDEEN

Compiled By

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TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

Ever since the creation of the universe Exalted Allah started the practice of sending "Men of God" for the mental and spiritual training and guidance of mankind. Beginning from Hazrat Adam (AS) this practice ended in the Prophethood of Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), the Messenger of Allah after whom no Prophet shall come till the Day of Judgement. However for the reform, prosperity and guidance of mankind Exalted Allah has created and shall continue creating in every age such "Men of action" who will discharge the duty of upholding the true Deen and of guiding humanity, in this age of materialism, without involving in this sacred work any interest or gain of their own.

One of these outstanding personalities of his age was Hujjatul Islam, Abu Hamid, Muhammad bin Muhammad Al-Ghazzali (RA). He appeared in the fifth century A.H., who holds a unique position in the history of Islam as a thinker and a reformer.

The learned Imam has presented Islam in his books as a thought and as a philosophy so nicely that his books still enjoy popular acclamation even after the passage of nine centuries after his demise. Men from all walks of life are benefiting from them and a pious revolution is taking place in their lives. The learned Imam (RA) has compiled countless books on various subjects, like Tafseer (commentary on the Holy Qur'an), Fiqh (Islamic Jurisprudence), Tasaw-wuf (Islamic Mysticism) and Philosophy, all of which are providing guidance to the Ummah. His specialized topic is however Tasaw-wuf. The most renowned of all these books is the Ihya-u Uloomiddin which Exalted Allah has granted such unique acceptance that men from all classes of the society including the general public as well as erudite Ulama have been receiving benefit from this book.

Like old Arabic reference books, the compilations of the Imam Ghazzali (RA) being in the Arabic language it was impossible for the Urdu knowing persons to benefit from his books. Of late, a very nice process of translating Arabic books into the Urdu language has been started in the sub - continent. As a result the original academic heritage of the Muslims, remaining hidden from the people of the sub - continent, is coming to the public view.

It was a very difficult and subtle task to translate the Imam's books because it did not involve the question of only translating them from Arabic into Urdu, but it also involved the question of a correct presentation of religious issues that is why these important books remained unknown for a long time.

May Exalted Allah grant good recompense to Mr. Khalil Ashraf Usmani owner of Darul-Isha'at, Karachi, for turning his attention to this issue. He took upon himself the responsibility of publishing these books by having them translated by qualified translators. Praise to Allah that by now he has published many books including Ihya-u-Uloomiddin.

Minhajul Abideen is a work of the same series which may rightly he considered as a summary of Ihya-u-Uloomiddin. Many Urdu translations of this book have been published. The learned translators have met an academy requirement by taking great pains in translating them. By the passage of time the language of some of these translations become difficult and the style of the translations too terse for the common man to understand at some places. As such I have translated this book in Urdu at the instance of Mr. Khalil Ashraf Usmani.

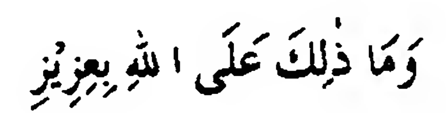
The most important point to bear in mind in translating a work into any language is that the translation should be as faithful to the original as possible in idiom and style and it

should not be literal. The translator, however, faces a genuine difficulty that sometimes he does not find the correct equivalent of words being translated from one language into another language. That is why sometimes the translation of a book becomes more difficult than writing the book which is going to be translated.

The translator of this book has tried to make the translation easy and faithful to the meanings of the original work instead of translating the book literally. It will be for the readers of this work to judge how far I have succeeded in this scheme.

I am aware of my limitations and may have committed mistakes in my translation. If the respected readers come across any mistakes, I request them to let me know them. May Exalted Allah reward them amply for this good deed.

In the end I pray to Exalted Allah to make this book a provion of the Hereafter, for the compiler, the translator, the publisher and their parents all of them. May Allah make this work a source of benefit and guidance for the Muslim Ummah.



A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE COMPILER

Every Muslim is aware of the biography of the compiler of this book. His accomplishments, excellence and qualities are preserved in the books of history and are well-known. His name is Abu Hamid bin Muhammad bin Muhammad Al - Ghazzali, His appellation is Hujjatul Islam and "Al-Imam" and his relative title is Ghazzali, Ghazzal being a town in Toos.

He was born in 450 A.H in Toos. After receiving elementary education in Toos he went to Nishapur where he received proficiency in the external sciences. Thereafter under the care and supervision of his Shaikh Imamul Haramain, Abul Ma'li (RA) he studied the science of Ahadith, and engaged himself in the composition and compilation of books. He surpassed the learned scholars of his time in academic discussions and debates.

In the year 48 A.H., Fakhrul - Mulk bin Nizamul Mulk appointed the Imam as a professor in the Nizamia University, Baghdad, where hundreds of students studied the various branches of learning at his hands. It was not long before his fame passing through the general public found access to the king and the dignitaries of the state and he was held by all in high honour and esteem.

Leaving behind all his high status and dignified position he went to Syria. There he led a retired life in the Jami', Damascus and Jerusalem and after this he made a pilgrimage to two sacred Harams. He passed some time in Syria, Egypt and Alexandria and returned home to lead a retired life in seclusion. At the request of the Ruler he served as a professor in the Nizamia University at Nishpur. Soon after he founded in his home-town Toos a monastery for the students of spiritual knowledge and a school for the students of

Ahadith. He divided his time for different services of Deen. He now passed all his time in teaching, delivering lectures and sermons, rehearsing Allah's names and the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Thus leading such a pious life this endless sea of knowledge and action passed away on Monday the fourteenth of Jama-di-al-oola, 505 A.H at the age of fifty five years.

رحمه الله تعالى رحمة واسعة

COMPILATIONS OF IMAM GHAZZALI (RA)

Imam Ghazzali (RA) has left behind for the lovers of knowledge and learning countless books on various sciences and Arts like Fiqh (Jurisprudence) Ahadith Kalam (theology), Tasaw-wuf (mysticism) and morality etc., only a few of his famous books are listed below :

1. Tafsir Yaqootut-Tanzeel, consisting of forty volumes.
2. Kitabul Baseet.
3. Kitabul Waseat.
4. Kitabul Jeez.
5. Al - Khulasah.

These four books are on Fiqh.

6. Mi'yarul - 'Ilm.
7. Qistas Mustaqeem
8. Tahafatul Philosophy,
9. Ihyau-Uloodmid deen. A book which provided right guidance to thousands of men[1].
10. Asrar-e-Mu'amalatid-Deen
11. Kitabul - Qurbat ila-Allah.

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[1] Darul Isha'at has published the Urdu translation of this book. They have also published its English translation in two volumes.

12.Mishkatul-Anwar.
13.Keemiya-e-Sa'adat.

As already mentioned, the Imam (RA) has left behind countless books on various subjects all of which are very valuable and beneficial. The book under review, "Minhajul Abideen" is the Imam's last compilation which is considered to be a peerless book on the science of Tasaw- wuf (Mysticism),

QUALITIES OF IMAM GHAZZALI (RA)

Countless qualities and virtues of Imam Ghazzali are recorded in the books of history which cannot be described here for want of space. Only one incident is mentioned below about him.

Shaikh Abul Hasan Shazli (RA). A Qutub of his time saw in a state of Kashf (spiritual revelation) that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is present in an assembly. Hazrat Moosa (AS) and Hazrat Eesaa (Jesus-AS) are sitting facing the blessed face of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). In this assembly the Holy Prophet (PBUH) was expressing pride that, Imam, Ghazzali (RA) is one of his Ummah.

May Exalted Allah, by His mercy and by virtue of the compiler (RA) accept from the translator this modest translation and make it a source of benefit for the public at large -Amen! May Allah also make it a provision of the Hereafter for the translator, the publisher and for their relations and friends and shower His special mercy on the entire Muslim community- Amen.

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

EVIDENCE TO AUTHENTICITY OF THE BOOK

A few students of the learned writer of this book have narrated it from him (RA). One of them is Shaikh Zadah bin Abdullah (RA), He has said that Imam Hujjatul-Islam, Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad Al-Ghazzali (RA) dictated the contents of this book only to a few of his selected students.

PREFACE

All praise is for Exalted Allah Who is most Merciful, Who created with His absolute power the earth and the heavens and set right the affairs of the universe with His exclusive wisdom. From amongst His creation We created Jinn and men for His worship and obedience, as He has said in the Holy Qur'an :

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ (الذاريات: ٥٦)

> I created Jinn and mankind only that they may worship Me (51:56)

Now the path lies very straight and illuminated before him who wants to follow the path of His worship and obedience. All kinds of proofs and guidance are clearly available to those who possess a discerning vision. However it is only Exalted Allah Who has the exclusive power to guide on the straight path of guidance or to push into the darkness of error and straying whomsoever He wills. He knows very well who are following the straight path of guidance who are in error.

Countless Darood and Salam (mercy and salutations) on the merciful Messenger of Allah, Muhammad (PBUH), the leader of all the Prophets and Messengers (AS) and on his household and progeny, till the Day of Judgement.

May Glorious Allah guide by His grace all the Muslims on to the deeds which attract His approval and pleasure. Devotion and obedience to Exalted Allah are the fruit and object of the acquisition of all knowledge and learning. The greatest gain of life and the main goal of human existence lie in the expression of servitude and submission to him. This attribute of servitude to Exalted Allah consists in the provisions of life-journey for the اولياء (Friends of Allah), the

path of the powerful, the course of the dignitaries, the objectives of the magnanimous, the symbol of the pious, the profession of the righteous, the favourite of the wise, the path of luck for the lucky and the road to Paradise for those desiring Paradise. Glorious Allah has said :

When I looked closely into this path and pondered over it thoroughly, I found that it is a very difficult and hazardous path to follow. It is a path full of very vide and arduous valleys and is blocked with hurdles and calamities. Highway robbers and hidden enemies (the self and Satan) are lying in ambush. There are only a few friends and helpers. As this is the path leading to Paradise, the garden of Eden, it should indeed be difficult and hazardous. It is just according to the description given by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) :

إن الجنة حُفّت بالمكاره وان النار حفت بالشهوات

> Paradise has been covered with unpleasant and undesirable things and hell has been covered with desires and lusts.

In other words, he who desires Paradise has to pass through many repulsive and unpleasant situations in this life and he who wishes Hell is absorbed in satisfying his lusts and desires. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has further said :

ألا وإن الجنة حَزنٌ بربوةٍ وان النار سهلٌ بسهوةٍ

> Beware ! Paradise is situated on a high steep ground and Hell is situated on a smooth low ground.

This means to say that it is difficult to climb up to Paradise and easy to get down to Hell. In other words, the way to Paradise is very difficult and the way to Hell is very easy.

Apart from this, it is another problem that by his nature man is very weak and the world is brought with all kinds of difficulties. Religious matters require full-time attention and man has inadequate spare time at his disposal for all this on account of his occupation with the worldly affairs. Life is short and the calamities of the times are very severe and death is nearby. A man traversing on this path must know that provision for the journey is indispensable which is nothing but worship and obedience. If anyone has not provided himself with this provision in this world, he cannot get it after death. One who has furnished himself with it will reach the goal of success and will be prosperous in both the worlds. He who remains deprived of this provision is grievous in loss and is doomed to perish. So, this is a very difficult and hazardous path indeed.

Those desiring to take this path are very few. Fewer still among these are they who put into practice their intention with firm resolution. Those who are able to reach their goal are much fewer. However, those who reach the desired goal are honourable servants whom Exalted Allah has chosen for his acquaintance and relationship. It is He who helped and protected them and admitted them into Paradise by his mercy and grace. May Exalted Allah include us all by his mercy, among such successful fortunate persons.

When I found the road to Paradise so difficult and full of hazards I took care to make provisions and was able to find out some how the necessary supplies and needs. I am full of hope that with these provisions and supplies the journey to Paradise will - God willing be completed with success and peace. These provisions and supplies consist of ability to worship, to put this ability into practice, to acquire necessary knowledge. All this can be performed only with the help of Exalted Allah. I have, therefore, compiled many books on the

subject of undertaking successfully the journey to Paradise, e.g. Ihya-ul-Uloomiddin, Kitabul - Qurbati - Ila - Allah etc.

All these books contain fine, academic issues and philosophical points which the general public could not grasp. Therefore they began to taunt and offer adverse comments on these books. There is however nothing surprising about this attitude of theirs. There can be no composition better than the Holy Qur'an which is a composition of the Lord of the worlds but the imprudent people did not spare even this Divine Book from their taunt and adverse comments and said :

إِنْ هٰذَآ إِلَّآ أَسَاطِيرُ الْأَوَّلِينَ (سورة الانعام : ٢٥)

This is nothing other than the fables of the men of old. (6:25)

Thus, when they treated the Divine Book in this way, how could they spare from their taunts a book of human composition. It is, however, appropriate for educated and wise men not to dispute with Allah's creatures but to treat them kindly. I, therefore, prayed to Allah, the king of all kings, to help me in compiling a book to which all may agree and which may be beneficial to the people.

The sustainer of the world who responds to the prayers of the helpless, accepted my prayer by teaching me the secret points and signs of Deen and a totally unique setup for the compilation of this book which I am going, with the help of Exalted Allah, to state now. It is that when a man resolves for the first time to take the path of worship, he receives from Allah guidance and help. The Holy Qur'an refers to this help and guidance.:

أَفَمَنْ شَرَحَ اللّٰهُ صَدْرَهُ لِلْإِسْلَامِ فَهُوَ عَلٰى نُوْرٍ مِّنْ رَّبِّهٖ (سورة الزمر: ٢)

He whose bosom Allah has expanded for Islam is in a light from his Lord. (39:2)

There is also Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) which means the same thing that when divine light enters man's heart it creates in it spaciousness, capacity and openness. The nobie companions asked : O messenger of Allah, is there any sign of this light by which it may be recognized ? He (PBUH) replied: These are feelings of distance from the house of fraud (the world), turning to the eternal house (the hereafter) and care to prepare for death before its arrival. If anyone has these qualities and tendencies in him it is a sign that light has entered his heart.

When the intention of taking the path of worship arises in a man's heart, he begins to think that he has been enriched with the blessings of Exalted Allah, viz., life, strength, wisdom, power of speech and many other blessings and means of comfort, bestowed upon him by Allah. With these he protects himself from troubles losses, distresses and calamities. So, he begins to believe that there must be some being who has granted him all these blessings and bounties and that, if he is now grateful and obedient to that Being, He will afflict punishment on him and take away his blessings.

He also begins to think that the true benefactor (Allah) has sent Prophets (AS) to furnish to the people knowledge about him. These Prophets (AS) displayed, with the help of Allah, supernatural miracle lying beyond human power and capacity. These Prophets (AS) taught the people that theirs is only one sustainer Lord who has power over every thing. He is All - Knowing, Everlasting and Eternal. He has asked you to do good deeds and refrain from sins and vices. He is able to punish those who are disobedient and to reward those who are obedient. He knows the secrets of the hearts and the notions passing through them. He has promised to grant salvation and

rewards. He has also warned the people against His punishment and torment. He has Commanded them to be regular in abiding by the injunctions of the sharee'ah.

All these directives and teachings create a firm belief in the hearts of the servants of Allah that all these assertions are quite possible from the rational point of view and nothing is impossible. This belief creates in the hearts of the people a fear of Exalted Allah and on anxiety about accountability before Him. This fear and anxiety awaken them for carelessness and negligence, complete the final argument and dispel their pleas and excuses and urge them to reflect upon the signs of Allah. As a result, a sound - minded person searches for ways and means for his salvation and a place of security. All this shows him the way of acquiring knowledge about the creator of the universe by reflecting with his sense and wisdom upon the universe and what it contains. He is guided to know the maker of the universe by pondering over his creation, so that he may come to believe in the unseen and may know that he has only one master and creator who has imposed on him the duty of obeying the injunctions of the Sharee'ah, to enforce, what is right and refrain from what is wrong. Thus, the first valley in the path of worship is to reflect on the creation of the universe to acquire a knowledge of its Creator. This is called عقبة العلم والعرفة (The valley of knowledge and acquaintance).

It is necessary that the servant of Allah should reflect intently on the signs and proofs needed to cross this difficult valley and inquire about the learned scholars who are able to guide the people on to the path of the Hereafter. They alone are qualified to lead the Ummah to the straight path. He should benefit by their guidance and seek their prayers (Du'as). Then he will - God willing succeed in crossing this valley and will have full confidence in the unseen غيب and shall admit :

"I have only one True and Genuine Allah who has created me, bestowed upon me His bounties, asked me to be grateful to him for His blessings and to obey him openly and secretly and to refrain from ingratitude and disobedience. He has promised everlasting reward for obedience and gratitude and everlasting punishment for disobedience and ingratitude"

The knowledge of all this will urge him to worship his creator and master whom he has come to know and recognize after great exertion and searching.

He has however not come to know as yet what is the way of worshipping Allah and what are his duties about obeying his Creator openly and secretly, viz. What open and secret obligations and injunctions of the Sharee'ah he has to obey and discharge. After acquiring this knowledge he crosses the first valley which is called عقبة العلم والمعرفه (The valley of knowledge and acquaintance).

After having learnt these injunctions and obligations he turns to obedience and service. In the mean time he remembers the countless sins and excesses he has committed in his life and is urged first to repent for all his sins and purify before establishing relationship with Allah. At this stage he faces another valley عقبة التوبة (The "Valley of Repentance"). He will, therefore engage himself in worship and devotion after crossing this "Valley of Repentance". At the same time he will confront another valley عقبة العوائق (the valley of obstacles). This is the negative valley of forces that will deter him from obedience and devotion. Now be finds that he cannot do full justice to worship and devotions owing to obstacles which are four in number;

(1) The world; (2) The creatures
(3) The self and (4) Satan.

The servant of Allah faces these obstacles in his path. He gives up or becomes indifferent to worship sometimes on account of the worldly charms, the creatures, the self or the seduction of Satan. It is, therefore necessary to get rid of these obstacles by renouncing the world, going into seclusion from the creatures and resisting the self and Satan with force and firm resolutions.

Man's 'Self' is the strongest of all these obstacles. It is easy to get rid of other obstacles but this self is most tenacious, as it is the weapon of human life and it always accompanies man till death. It is also very difficult rather impossible, to eradicate it.

It can, however, be kept under control with the bridle of Taqwa (righteousness), so that it may be subdued to obedience and prevented from rebellion. Thus, it is also a permanent valley and Allah's assistance is needed to cross it.

After having crossed this valley with Allah's help, man will face certain obstacles which will not let him devote himself to worship with full attention and submission. These are four in number:-

1. **Sustenance** : Man's self tries to keep him away from worship by frightening him from poverty. By being engaged in devotion and dissociating himself from the world he cannot earn his livelihood enough to support his dependents.

2. **Fears and misgivings:** Man remains in doubts and suspicions about the suitability or unsuitability of a

project and job he wants to undertake. He fears failures.

3. **Calamities and hardships:** Man thinks that by taking the path of Allah he shall have to face calamities and hardships along with opposition and displeasure from the people. He shall have to bear various troubles and difficulties.

4. **Divine Decree** : This Divine Decree or fate sometimes favours and sometimes goes against man and is often full of bitterness.

Sometime, man is confronted with these obstacles called عقبة العوارض (the valley of hindrances). In order to cross them successfully he stands in need of four items:

1. To have full trust in Exalted Allah in the matter of sustenance.

2. To entrust everything to Exalted Allah in the matter of fears and misgivings.

3. To bear with patience the calamities and hardships that fall on him.

4. To submit passively to the will of Exalted Allah in the matter of Divine Decree.

When a man has inculcated all these attributes in him and has with the help of Almighty Allah, crossed this valley, he will face another valley. He shall feel that his self is not inclined to indulge in worship and has fallen a victim to extraordinary negligence in this matter; it has become adverse to righteousness and is interested in sins and vices. Now in such a situation an impetus is needed to create an interest in the self to turn to worship and obedience and to keep away

from sins and vices and create in it a fear of Exalted Allah. This impetus lies in two acts :

1. Hope
2. Fear of Exalted Allah.

In other words, man should hope for reward and recompense which Allah has promised as a reward for piety, righteousness, and good deeds. This act of helping will urge the self to worship, obedience and good deeds, Similarly, a man should think of the grievous punishment and of the tortures and hardships which he is likely to face in the Hereafter. When this fear is born in the heart, man will give up disobedience and sins. This valley is called عقبة البواعث (the value of urge and Impetus). When this valley stands in the way, man should cross it, keeping in view the foregoing directions.

After having crossed all these valleys there will be nothing to stop his from devoting himself to worship and good deeds with full concentration of mind and due submission. At this stage he shall feel the presence of such attribute as shall induce him to indulge in worship and obedience with full concentration.

After engaging himself in worship man shall feel that two major calamities are still spoiling his worship. One of these calamities is show or ostentation and the other is pride. The love to show his worship defeats the very purpose of his worship and destroys it altogether. Sometimes pride is born in his heart because of his righteous deeds and he begins to feel that he has become a very devout and saintly person and then he falls a victim to self-deception then the entire acts of righteousness go waste. In this way now another valley stands in his way which is called عقبة القوادح (The valley of Factors ruining worship). To cross this valley safely he stands in need

of two other attributes. (1) Sincerity and (2) Allah's grace and mercy. With the help of these attributes he should adorn his worship with sincerity and faithfulness to Exalted Allah and should believe that all his attributes and good qualities are due only to Allah's help and mercy.

این سعادت بزور بازو نیست
تانه بخشد خدای بخشنده

> This good luck in him is not due to his own power and efforts but it is due to the help and favour of merciful Allah.

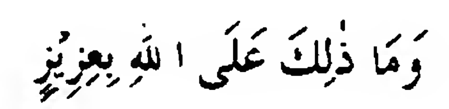
In the absence of such feeling there is every likelihood that good deeds are being ruined and these words may - God forbid become applicable to him : خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ (he lost the world as well as the Hereafter). He should cross this value with Allah's help. After having crossed all these valleys, man attains the goal of worship and freedom from all calamities

Now he realizes that he is permanently drowned in the bounties and mercy of Exalted Allah. It is due only to Allah's infinite mercy that he is enjoying the virtue of worship, good deeds and total freedom from sins and vices. It will mean a grievous loss if he becomes neglectful of this bounteous Master Allah. In that case he shall lose his status as a Wali (friend) and as a favoured servant of Allah. He may be deprived of His blessings and his good deeds. He therefore praises Exalted Allah and pays thanks to Him. We call this عقبة الحمد والشكر (the valley of praise and thanksgiving).

When a man crosses this valley also with the help of Allah, he realizes that he is about to reach his destination and attain his objective. After advancing further on this path he shall arrive in the land of Allah's mercy and grace and the plain of divine love and access to Allah. He shall be admitted

into the place of the pleasure of Allah, and the abode of the Angels. He will be granted special status of nearness to Allah and admission to the grand assembly of those who always invoke and pray to Exalted Allah. He will become entitled to the gifts and bounties of his creator. He will become so deeply absorbed in the company of the spiritual Angels that he shall pass the remaining part of his life in the garden of Allah's remembrance. Bodily he will be in this world but spiritually and virtually his heart will remain attached to the affairs of the Hereafter. His love for and interest in the affairs of the world will vanish gradually. Every moment he will be waiting for the call of death with a desire to meet Allah. The call will ultimately come to him accompanied with glad tidings. He will be transferred from this transitory world to the eternal world of the Hereafter, where he will be ushered into Paradise with great honour, ease comfort and luxuries and love. Divine reception and entertainment will be too rich and sumptuous to be described in words. This unique status and these blessings and bounties will be on the increase day by day. Even the Angels will envy him on his success and promotion.

We pray to Exalted Allah to include us all, by His mercy, among such servants and favour us with His great gifts and bounties and exclude us from His rejected and condemned servants. May He help us all to put our knowledge into practice, to pass our lives according to His will and pleasure and let not our knowledge be a curse on us. This is all very easy for Him as He is the Most Merciful of all who show mercy.



And this is not at all difficult for Allah.

The following is the order and set-up to which I have referred in the beginning. The gist of this order and set-up it is that seven valley stand in the path of worship and devotion :

1. The valley of knowledge and acquaintance.
2. The valley of Repentance.
3. The valley of obstacles.
4. The valley of Hindrances.
5. The valley of urge and Impetus.
6. The valley of Factors ruining worship.
7. The valley of Praise and gratitude.

A discussion of all these valleys will complete my book, Minhajul 'Abideen. I shall state briefly the relevant meanings and important points and shall also give some details thereon in separate chapters for this I seek Allah's help and لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ

Chapter One

THE VALUE OF KNOWLEDGE AND ACQUAINTANCE.

The basic need of anyone who desires salvation and a life of worship and devotion is to acquire knowledge and Acquaintance as this is the origin of everything on which depends all success. Knowledge and worship are so valuable and priceless gems that they form the subject-matter of all the compilations of the learned writers and of the speeches and sermons of the erudite religious scholars. The entire activities around us are devoted to the diffusion of the light of these most precious and essential divine gifts. To spread this light of knowledge and learning Exalted Allah revealed heavenly scriptures and sent down Prophets (AS). In fact, Allah created all things and all beings of the world and the heavens for the sake of knowledge and worship. The Qur'an says !

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِیْ خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ وَّمِنَ الْاَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ یَتَنَزَّلُ الْاَمْرُ بَیْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوْٓا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰی كُلِّ شَیْءٍ قَدِیْرٌ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ اَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَیْءٍ عِلْمًا .

(سورة الطلاق: ١٢)

The verse means :-

It is Allah who has created the seven heavens and of the earth the like thereof. The commandment comes down among them slowly that you may know that Allah is Able to do all things and that Allah surrounds all things in knowledge. (65:12)

This verse is a clear proof of the excellence and importance of knowledge, particularly, the knowledge of religious tenets and of the oneness of Allah. At another place it has been said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُوْنِ (سورة الذاريات : ٥٦)

"I created the Jinn and mankind that they may worship only Me." (51:56)

There is a very clear description in this verse of the purpose of life. Thus, the most important work of the world consists of acquisition of knowledge and devotion to worship of Exalted Allah. This is also the aim of the creation of the two worlds. It is, therefore, very imperative that man should devote himself to these two duties sincerely and diligently in preference to all other activities which are vain and useless.

It should be noted that knowledge is superior to worship. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith : An 'Alim (a learned man) is superior to a worshipper, just as I am superior to you.

He (PBUH) also said : To call upon an 'Alim is better than a year's worship, night vigil and fasting. He (PBUH) also said : Should I tell you who are the best dwellers of Paradise? The noble companions (RAA) said : Yes, O Messenger of

Allah! Do tell us that. He (PBUH) said the Ulama of my Ummah.

It appears from the foregoing Ahadith that in essence knowledge is better than worship. (It does not, however mean that worship is less important). In fact only that knowledge is useful which is put into practice and used in worship. Knowledge without action thereon is useless. Knowledge is like a tree and worship is like its fruit. A tree without fruit loses its importance.

Side by side with knowledge worship too is essential. It is, therefore, necessary for man to acquire excellence in both these branches.

Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) has said:

> "Acquire knowledge without causing any loss to worship. Similarly, devote yourself to worship without causing any loss to the acquisition of knowledge.

Thus it becomes confirmed that knowledge and worship both are important in their places for practice and action. Knowledge should, however, be accorded a preference, because it is the guiding factor. That is why, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said : Knowledge is the guiding factor of action and action is subordinate to knowledge. (In other words knowledge is indispensable for action; no action can be taken without knowledge.) There are two reasons for according preference to knowledge.

For worship to be in order and rightly offered it is very necessary that the worshipper should have adequate knowledge about his Lord whom he is worshipping concerning His entity and attributes, both personal and

qualitative, essential and impossible. This is necessary, lest he should, in his ignorance, ascribe to Allah some unrealistic and derogatory attribute to Exalted Allah and thus ruin his worship altogether.

This is a grievous risk which I have discussed in detail in my book, Ihya-ul-Uloomiddeen under the heading "Bad End" in the chapter on "Fear" (كتاب الخوف).

Thereafter, man should acquire knowledge about essential duties (commands) and then knowledge about the prohibitions as laid down in the Sharee'ah. Then these commands must be obeyed and the prohibitions shunned totally. It is not possible to worship Allah in the right way and refrain from sins, unless a man learns the method, style the prescribed hours and the manner of praying.

It is necessary in connection with the Shara'ee forms of worship to know the essential duties, like purity of the body Prayer (Salat), fasting and Zakat (compulsory charity) including their various problems, injunctions and conditions etc. In order to perform these various forms and items of worship correctly. It is not only likely but quite certain that on account of ignorance a man may be doing during his worship something which may violate his prayer ablution or he may fail to do these acts according to the Sunnah.

It is, therefore very important to know the problems and injunctions not only about their outer form but also about their inner spirit. This is an essential duty. Thus توكل (Trust in Allah),

تفويض (Entrusting all matters to Allah), رضا (Contentment with Allah's Decrees), صبر (Patience), توبة (Repentance) إخلاص (Sincerity) etc. Are forms of worship of the

heart which will - God willing be explained in the ensuing chapters.

In the same way it is necessary to acquire knowledge about the prohibitions which are the opposites of the commandments. These are: سخط (Anger), طول امل (Prolonged hopes), رياء (Ostentation), كبر (Pride), عجب و حسد (Vanity and Jealousy), etc. It is necessary to refrain from these inner vices because inner worship is also an obligatory duty, about which Glorious Allah has issued clear injunctions, For example :

وَعَلَى اللهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوْا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُؤْمِنِيْنَ . (سورة المائدة : ٢٣)

So put your trust in Allah if you are believers. (5:23)

وَاشْكُرُوْا لِلّٰهِ اِنْ كُنْتُمْ اِيَّاهُ تَعْبُدُوْنَ . (سورة البقرة : ٢٣)

.... and render thanks to Allah if you worship only Him. (2:23)

وَاصْبِرْ وَمَا صَبْرُكَ اِلَّا بِاللهِ. (سورة النحل : ١٢٧)

Endure patiently (O Muhammad); your endurance is only by (the help of) Allah. (16:127)

وَاصْبِرُوْا اِنَّ اللهَ مَعَ الصَّابِرِيْنَ . (سورة الانفال : ٣٦)

Endure patiently, for Allah is with those who are patient- (8:46)

وَتَبَتَّلْ اِلَيْهِ تَبْتِيْلًا (سورة المزمل : ٨)

And devote to Him with complete devotion. (73:8)

Now see that in these verses Exalted Allah has enjoined sincerity in all actions and deeds. There are other verses containing similar injunctions like those about prayers fasting, etc. It is surprising that the people take care to discharge their obligations to prayers and fasting but pay no attention to the obligation mentioned above, although both these categories are equal in their obligatory nature and the Holy Qur'an contains injunctions about both.

What will be the fate of that person who is so much drowned in his worldly affairs that he makes no distinction between what is good and what is bad. Leaving aside the good deeds which Exalted Allah has described in the Holy Qur'an as wisdom and light of right guidance, he acquires such knowledge whereby he earns unlawful wealth and wretched worldly gains.

O you who are hankering after the world! Have you no fear of Allah in your heart that ignoring many of the essential duties (واجبات), you are devoting yourself to optional prayers and fasting? This behaviour on your part speaks of your worthlessness. It is also likely that you may, in your ignorance or negligence be committing such major sins as, may render you liable for punishment. This being your behaviour, if you give up some of the permissible deeds like eating drinking, sleeping, etc. For the sake of attaining nearness to Allah your labour will go waste. What is worse and more risky is that you build hopes on these acts, although it is sin to entertain hopes and expectations. You are under the misconception that yours is a good intention. There is a difference between a good intention and wishfulness of which you are not aware.

Again, you may be expressing to Exalted Allah your anxiety, anguish and unwillingly fear, impatience and displeasure, and be thinking that in this way you are only expressing your submission and supplication to Allah. You are

addicted to ostentation and show, yet consider it lawful; you may invite the people to piety and righteousness, Yet you take your sins as acts of virtue on account of this invitation, and thereby you may hope for reward instead of punishment. This is all Satan's deception and you are labouring under a misconception and grave negligence. All these ills and evils befall him who does something without acquiring the requisite knowledge which is most imperative.

It should also be borne in mind that the outer actions and inner actions are closely interrelated, with the result that deterioration in one affects the other. For example, ostentation or show being an inner action is not visible to others, but it has the effect of spoiling worship and rendering it unacceptable in the sight of Exalted Allah. Similarly, اخلاص (sincerity) is an inner action but its presence or absence renders the outer actions acceptable or unacceptable.

A man's outer actions cannot be sound, unless be knows the effects of the inner actions on the outer ones and knows how and from which of the inner actions he should keep himself aloof. Thus, for want of this knowledge neither his inner nor his outer actions can be sound and acceptable. His endeavors without knowledge will result in nothing but mere toil and trouble. Thus it has been said in the Holy Qur'an :

خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ۚ ذَٰلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِينُ (سورة الحج: ١١)

He loses both the world and the Hereafter; that is indeed an evident loss. (22:11)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has also said:

It is the fortunate and pious who are granted learning and the unfortunate are deprived of it.

This Hadith means that a man without knowledge is unfortunate in every respect. It is his bad luck that **he** is without knowledge. For this reason all his worship and devotion go waste and they are rendered unacceptable.

نعوذ با لله من فتنة الجهل ومن علم لا ينفع ومن عمل لا يرفع

> I seek refuge with Allah from the trial of ignorance, from knowledge that is not profitable and from a deed that is not lifted above (i.e. it remains unaccepted).

That is why, all the saints of the Ummah and the friends of Allah first tried to acquire knowledge. The soundness of worship mostly depends on knowledge. Discerning men, scholars and qualified persons consider knowledge to be the foundation of all good deeds and virtues.

The entire discussions boils to the conclusion that without knowledge worship remains defective and incomplete. It is, therefore, necessary to accord preference to knowledge to worship. Another reason to accord preference to knowledge is that beneficial knowledge creates fear of Allah, the Lord of the two worlds, Exalted Allah has said :

إِنَّمَا يَخْشَى اللهَ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ الْعُلَمَاءُ .

> It is the learned ones among His servants who fear Allah. (35:28).

A man who has not acquired adequate knowledge of and acquaintance with Allah, cannot do full justice to His worship, nor to His fear, nor to His respect and regard. That is why knowledge combines in it all virtues and qualities. It accumulates in one person all virtues and stops him from all vices. He becomes entitled to Allah's help and support. These

are the only two gifts which a servant of Allah needs in the path of worship. It is knowledge which is the first requirement of a man in following the path of worship.

SECTION 1

To Acquire Knowledge Is An Obligatory Duty

THE LIMITS OF KNOWLEDGE

There is a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH):

طلبُ العلم فريضةٌ على كُلّ مسلمٍ ومُسلمة

It is an obligatory duty of every Muslim man and woman to seek knowledge.

A question arises as to which kind of knowledge does the Hadith refer and what are its limits?

The answer to this question is that it refers to the seeking of three kinds of knowledge:-

1. The knowledge of Tauheed (the oneness of Allah), i.e., knowledge of tenets.

2. Knowledge of secrets, i.e. the knowledge of practicing the Sharee'ah and to Tasaw-wuf (Mysticism) which concerns the heart and its spiritual diseases.

3. The knowledge of the Sharee'ah i.e. . Islamic Jurisprudence and its principles.

As regards the limits of knowledge these are: Knowledge of the Oneness of Allah and Tenets form an obligatory duty to the extent that a man should learn correctly

that he has to worship Allah, the one who has no partner, is adorned with all attributes, is Free from "Newness" He has no beginning and no end. He is eternal and Everlasting. Muhammad (PBUH) is His servant and Messenger whatever he (PBUH) conveyed with his blessed tongue to his Ummah from his Lord (Allah) is cent per cent true. This includes, revelations and details about the events of the Hereafter. It is necessary to understand and know that tenets of the school of the Ahle-e-Sunnat wal Jama'at so that man may remain safe from matters contrary to the Sharee'ah, innovations and forbidden acts. Do not invent in Deen anything new, nor try to prove as correct what is not proved from the Qur'an and the Ahadith. This is a very dangerous matter. As regards Tawheed (Oneness of Allah), its proofs are available in the Book of Allah, i.e. The Holy Qur'an. Our learned scholars have explained them in detail in the books of Principles of Deen. In short, it is an obligatory duty to learn everything the ignorance of which may lead man to ruin, error and deviation from the straight path. It is not lawful to be ignorant of such important matters.

It is necessary to acquire such knowledge of the secrets i.e. The knowledge of "Sulook and Tasaw-wuf" as may acquaint man with the commands and prohibitions and he may become aware of Allah's greatness and glory, and the sincerity of intention and be able to preserve and protect this knowledge (In order to become secure from the vices and sins which ruins virtues and good deeds). Details of most of these will follow shortly. The limits of the knowledge concerning the Sharee'ah and Fiqh (Jurisprudence) it is that man should acquire the knowledge of all the obligatory duties. It is necessary to know these duties and the method of their discharging in full detail, e.g. purification of the body, Prayer, fasting. It is also necessary to have a knowledge of Zakat and Hajj for those on whom these obligations fall due, so that they may discharge these obligations. It is not obligatory, although it is desirable, for

those who are not liable for these two obligations to have a knowledge thereof. These are the minimum limits of knowledge which must be acquired as a matter of obligation, as there is no escape from this. As regards the question of acquiring this knowledge in greater details, so as to be able to debate with non-Muslims and convince them of the truth of Islam with convincing arguments and proofs, it is فرض كفايه (an obligation which can be discharged by a section of the population of an area on behalf of the entire population. If none discharges this duty the entire population becomes liable for it.) The obligation on you is limited to the extent that your beliefs and tenets become quite right and in order. You are not liable for more than this.

As regards the knowledge of Tawheed, it is not necessary to know all its branches, details and problems relating to it. Its knowledge is necessary only to an extent which may enable you to correct your doubts and remove your misunderstandings if you ever face them. It is not necessary that you should involve yourself in debates and arguments an this topic, because it is likely to throw you into doubts and confusion. It must also be understood that in every area and city there should be a learned scholar to resolve such doubts refute بدعات (innovations). He should remain busy with acquiring detailed knowledge about these matters. In the presence of such a scholar the responsibility is lifted from the rest of the population.

It is also not necessary to have a detailed knowledge of the 'secrets', except that one must know those vices and evils which spoil worship, so that one may remain safe from them. It is also necessary to have a knowledge of the good actions of the hearts, e.g., praise of Allah, gratitude, trust in Allah, etc. But for this, a detailed knowledge is not necessary. Likewise, it is not essential to have a detailed knowledge of all the chapters of Islamic Jurisprudence (Fiqh), viz., Nikah (marriage),

divorce, sale, monopoly, etc. This is فرض كفايه (a collective and not an individual duty, as has already been explained)

One may ask if it is possible to acquire such knowledge of Tawheed without a teacher forms as an obligatory duty of every individual.

The answer to this question is that a teacher solves difficulties and makes learning easier and quicker. Allah grants the honour of being a teacher whom He wills. It should be borne in mind that the valley of knowledge is very difficult to cross. Many people take its path then give up their journey and some go astray from that path. Some fortunate persons cross this valley quickly and successfully, but some remain wandering this way and that way in utter confusion. In fact everything rests in the hands of Allah.

I have already mentioned that the virtue of service to and worship of Allah solely depends on the requisite knowledge, particularly the knowledge of Tawheed and Tasaw-wuf and there is no escape from it.

It occurs in a narrative that Exalted Allah commanded Hazrat Daood (AS) to acquire useful knowledge . He (AS) inquired as to what kind of knowledge was useful. Allah told him (AS) : Usual knowledge is that which helps to recognize My greatness and grandeur and to believe that I have power over all things. This knowledge shall bring you closer to Me.

Hazrat Ali (RAA) is reported to have said:

If I had died in my childhood and entered Paradise, I would not have been as happy as I would have been happy on knowing my Lord on growing up. This is because the man who is favoured with a knowledge of Allah will fear Him most and will worship him most sincerely and heartily. Knowledge

should be acquired with sincerity of intention and right understanding and not only with the help of traditions and narrations. (It is difficult to put into practice knowledge that is acquired without understanding it.)

That knowledge becomes a source of loss instead of gain which is acquired with the intention of overpowering men, associating and mixing with the rich, taking pride in defeating opponents in argumentation or for attaining worldly gains.

Hazrat Bayazid (RA) once said:

I devoted myself and my soul to the acquisition of knowledge for about thirty years but I did not find anything more risky for me than knowledge. (Satan tries to create pride in the hearts of the learned on account of their learning by which they are generally beguiled.) You should, however, not allow Satan to deceive you when knowledge is so dangerous, it should be avoided and abandoned. This mode of thinking is wrong and misleading .

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said :

> When on the night of Ascension معراج I peeped into Hell I saw that most of its inmates were the poor people. The noble companions (RAA) asked: O Messenger of Allah! Were they those who had no money? The Holy Prophet said: so, they were devoid of knowledge and learning. (Knowledge is the root of all injunctions and commandments).

A man without knowledge is ignorant of the injunctions about worship. He cannot worship Allah according to the prescribed etiquette and conditions. As such, an ignorant

man is in loss, even if he devotes himself to worship like all the Angels of the heavens. So O worshipper, put all your thought and attention in the acquisition of knowledge and avoid idleness and confusion. Beware that error and straying are the worst dangers confronting you.

When you reflect on the attributes and creation of Almighty Allah you will become convinced that you have only One Allah Worthy of worship who has absolute power over all things with an exclusive will He is All-Knowing and All-Seeing. His speech, knowledge and will are not "new", He is immune from all kinds of losses and calamities. He is also Free from the attributes of all that is created. He is neither like a created being, nor is there anyone like Him. He is also free from place and directions; no accident or distress can approach Him.

When a man reflects on the miracles and the tokens of Prophethood of the Messenger of Allah (PBUH) he shall become convinced that he (PBUH) is the true Messenger of Allah and the trustee of His revelations.

If you examine the beliefs of the past saints and the dignitaries of the Ummah, you will find that they had a belief in the vision of Glorious Allah (in the Hereafter), that He is Living, He has no limit and no direction, that the Holy Qur'an is Allah's uncreated word; it is neither letters nor has its voice. If it were in letters or voice, it would become something created. It is, therefore Free from letters and voice because these are attributes of what is new and not of what is Eternal and Everlasting.

Whatever happens in the universe happens with the command, will and power of Allah. All virtues and vices, gains and losses, belief and disbelief are subordinate to Allah's will and wish nothing concerning the creatures is binding on

Him. If He rewards anyone, it is His mercy and if He punishes anyone it is His justice.

Whatever the custodian of the Sharee'ah, i.e. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said with his sacred tongue is true without any doubt. These include : Affairs of the Hereafter and the Partition (برزخ), Resurrection, punishment of the grave, the interrogation (in the grave) by the two Angels, Munkir and Nakir, the scale Justice, etc. These are all true and they form principles of Deen. All the past and present saints of the Ummah have been professing and acting upon these beliefs. They have always refrained from innovation and new things in Deen. We too therefore, seek refuge with Exalted Allah from these innovations and desires and lusts.

After having learnt the various beliefs and tenets, man should acquire knowledge about of the heart, e.g. Sincerity, show, pride, etc. Thereafter, knowledge should be acquired about the necessary outer acts, e.g. Purity, prayers, fasting, Zakat, Hajj, etc. When you have acquired knowledge to this extent according to the details mentioned, you have completed the knowledge of the obligatory duties pertaining to every individual and have become aware of the problems and injunctions of the Sharee'ah, Now you may be counted among the Ulama of the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), on the condition that you act according to the knowledge you have acquired and are anxious about the safety of your final fate (in the Hereafter).

After having completed a servant of Allah in true sense, working with knowledge sense and understanding, you are no longer ignorant, a mere follower of others nor negligent. You have by the grace of Allah, crossed the valley of knowledge and acquaintance and have paid its full due.

May Exalted Allah help us all, by His grace, to act upon these injunctions with ease and facility.

Chapter Two

THE VALLEY OF REPENTANCE

O worshippers of Allah! When you have crossed safely the first valley of knowledge and acquaintance, it is binding on you to offer Repentance and is necessary for two reasons.

Firstly, one who takes to Repentance is facilitated to worship Exalted Allah. When a man is addicted to sins, he is deprived of the virtue and facility of worship because of the curse of his sins. Sins stand in the way of service and obedience to Allah. The burden of sins retards the prayers and activities of good deeds and servitude to Allah. Insistence and firmness on sins blackens the heart. On account of this the sinner always remains afflicted with the darkness and hardness of the heart. He possesses neither sincerity, nor the purity of the heart nor the sweetness of Eeman (belief). This hardness of the heart sometimes leads to God forbid - to infidelity and permanent misfortune.

In such a situation how can that man be assisted at worship and accepted for religious service who is caught in the curse of sins and hard-heartedness? How can a man drowned in sins deserve nearness to Allah for invoking Him.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said that when a man tells lies the Angels get away from the liar on account of the bad smell emanating from his mouth (which the Angels can realize). How can such a foul-smelling tongue be fit for the remembrance of Allah? A sinner cannot hope to devote himself to worship, because his outer body is not fit for worship. If he is ever compelled to worship he does it with difficulty and hesitation. Such worship neither contains sweetness, nor any taste nor freedom from sins. This is all due to the woes of sins and failure to repent from them. Someone has said, and quite rightly, that if a man does not possess the strength of getting up at nights and fasting during days, this is a clear proof that his sins have overpowered him. Thus, the first need of repentance is to serve oneself from being deprived of the virtue of worship.

The second reason for Repentance is that by virtue of Repentance, worship and obedience find access to the Divine Court of Allah. A creditor does not accept from his debtor, presents and gifts because the creditor desires repayment of the amount due by the debtor. In the same way a person presents to Allah the gift of worship without Repentance (which is a right due to Allah) the gift of worship will not be accepted by Allah. How can this gift of worship be accepted when obligatory duties are outstanding against the man and he is occupied with optional prayers? Ignoring what is lawful and permissible, he is insisting on what is unlawful and forbidden. Allah is displeased with such a servant and the latter is submitting to Allah his appeal and supplications. How can Allah accept this appeal and supplication? The sinners remain in disobedience by failing to take to Repentance.

THE MEANING OF TAUBATUN-NASOOH AND ITS LIMITS

What are the meaning and limits of Tabatun-Nasooh (sincere Repentance)? What should we do to refrain from sins and purify ourselves from vices?

Taubah (Repentance) is one of the acts of the heart. According to the Ulama it means briefly that we should purify our hearts from the filth of sins. My Shaikh (RA) told me that it is Taubah that we give up a sin after understanding the greatness and grandeur of the Lord of the worlds and in fear of Allah's wrath and punishment.

There are four conditions for Repentance:

1. After giving up the sin a man should make a firm resolve that he shall never commit that sin again. The man will get reward for his act of giving up a sin, but this will not be Repentance unless he makes a firm resolve never to commit that sin again.

2. It is also necessary that the man should have been committing the sin which he has now given up. If he did not commit that sin in the past he will be called a righteous man متقی but not one who repents.

   Take an example. Hazrat Ali (RA) embraced Islam when he was yet a minor child and had not committed the sin of being an unbeliever. It is therefore correct to say that he was safe from unbelief, but it is not correct to say that he had repented for his disbelief. It can be said about Hazrat Umar (RA) that he repented for disbelief because he was a disbeliever before accepting Islam.

3. The sin for which a man is repenting now should be similar in degree and level to the sin which he committed in the past, even though the similarity may not, be quite apparent in form. For example an old man is now repenting for the major sins of adultery and robbery which he had been committing during his past life. His repentance will be valid (although he is no longer able to commit these sins) because the door of repentance is still open for him. This is to say that Taubah (Repentance) will be quite valid in respect of sins which a man has power to commit and also sins which he has no power and ability to commit.

4. Repentance should be offered for the sole reason of realizing the greatness and grandeur of Allah and for fear of His punishment. It should not be offered for some worldly gain nor for fear of the people nor for praise and fame nor for some weakness and poverty or the like.

If these four conditions are fulfilled in Taubah (Repentance) it will be valid and true.

THREE PREREQUISITES AND CAUSES OF REPENTANCE

These prerequisites are :

1. There should be extreme abherrance to sins in the heart.

2. The grievous and severe punishment of Allah and His displeasure should be in view.

3. Man should realize his weakness that he will have no excuse for his sins in the Hereafter. A man is not

able to bear in this world the severity of the hot sun, the bite of an ant and the slap of a policeman. How can, then, such a man bear in the Hereafter, the severe punishment of Allah the heat of Hell-Fire, the beating of the Angels, the horrible snakes and scorpions of Hell? How can he face the house of torture and ruin which is called Hell?

We seek refuge with Allah again and again from His wrath and punishment and from Hell.

When a servant keeps these points constantly in his mind and thinks of them many times daily then - God willing - he will soon succeed with "Taubatun-Nasooh" i.e., true and sincere Repentance.

One may put this question ? The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said: الندم توبة (i.e. sincere regret on sins is Repentance). He (PBUH) did not mention the conditions for Repentance which you have mentioned. Why is it so?

In fact the questioner has not understood the meaning of this Hadith. توبة (Repentance) and ندامة (Regret) are two different acts. Regret is unintentional. Sometimes man feels regret on some act unintentionally, even though be does not like the feeling of this regret. On the other hand, Repentance is a deliberate action which man has been commanded to take. Thus, these are two different acts.

A man may feel regret or remorse on a sin, because the sin has spoiled his righteousness or may be due to some worldly loss. This regret will not mean Repentance. What the foregoing Hadith means is that only that regret or remorse or sins will become Repentance which arises from a feeling of the greatness and grandeur of Allah, and fear for His wrath and displeasure. Regret on sins is really on attribute of the

repentant servants of Allah. If a repentant person Keeps in view the three prerequisites of Repentance regret will be born in his heart which will urge him to refrain from sins. The presence of this regret in the heart will direct the man towards supplication and humbleness. Regret is a cause of Repentance and an attribute of repentant persons. That is why the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has called it Repentance.

Another question may arise in this connection. How can it be possible for a man not to commit any major or minor sin?

Take heed that even about the Holy Prophet (PBUH), the Ulama differed whether He (PBUH) had reached a stage at which He (PBUH) could commit no sins. You should know that this is not difficult for a man when Allah, the Lord of the worlds, chooses him for His help and special mercy. Exalted Allah bestows His grace and mercy on whom He wills.

It is a condition for Repentance that man should not entertain intentionally the idea of a sins. It is hoped that Allah will forgive, in His mercy, sins that are committed by mistake and through forgetfulness.

Someone may say that he does not take to Repentance, because he has no confidence in his self. He fears that he may commit the sin even after his repentance, and repentance will do him no good.

Beware, this trend of thinking is Satan's deception. How do you know that you must commit sins? It is possible that you may not get a chance to commit sins and may die during the state of your Repentance? None knows the time of death. It is a man's responsibility that, while offering his sincere repentance, he should make firm resolve not to commit sins, even though he may have in his heart a fear that he may

commit some sin in the future. It is Allah's Job to help him complete the repentance and fulfil the resolve made by His servant. If he remains secure from sins in the future, the object of Repentance is attained. If by chance he commits a sin, his past sins having been forgiven only this present sin will be recorded in the Register of his Deeds. This also is a considerable gain. It is nothing but Satan's deception not to offer repentance for fear of committing sins in future. One of these two gains must accrue to a man who offers repentance.

وا لله ولي التوفيق والهداية

SECTION 1

HOW TO REFRAIN FROM AND GIVE UP SINS

There are three kinds of sins.

1. To abandon the obligatory duties imposed by Allah, e.g., prayers, fasting, Zakat etc. These must be discharged to the best of one's ability and at any cost.

2. Those sins which are between Allah and His servants e.g. rights of Allah, including drinking wine, music, eating usury etc. Every effort should be made to refrain from this and to take a resolve not to commit these sins in future.

3. Those sins that relate to the servants of Allah (حقوق العباد), which are most harmful of all the remaining sins. For example, to cause harm to anyone's life, Property honour or faith. In case of causing any harm to anyone's wealth and Property, if possible the loss should be made good to the claimant by the payment of compensation. If payment of

compensation for the loss in not possible in this way because of poverty, the claimant should be requested to waive his claim. If the claimant is not traceable or is dead, the amount of the claim should be spent on charity on his behalf. If this too is not possible the debtor should do more and more good deeds and turn to Exalted Allah with a prayer to satisfy the claimant on the Day of Judgement.

If he has killed anyone, the heirs of the victim will have the right to receive ransom money for the murder. They can either recover this ransom money ro waive it. In case the heirs are not traceable, it is necessary for the murderer to pray to Allah and crave forgiveness for this sin, so that on the Day of Judgement Exalted Allah may, by His mercy, make the victim become pleased to waive his right against the murder.

If the man has injured anyone's honour and dignity by backbiting abusing him or by casting slur on the victim, this may be made good by admitting the sin and his falsehood and seeking the victim's pardon. This course may be adopted only when there is no likelihood of a worsening and deteriorating situation being created. In such a situation the only alternative remains that Exalted Allah should be implored and involved to make the victim of the excesses pleased with the sinner.

If a person has attacked and disgraced the honour of anyone, i.e., he has committed a breach of trust with someone's children or wife by making a criminal assault on them it is not advisable to disclose such sins to the guardian or the husband. This is to avoid a possible occurrence of enmity and corruption. In such a situation the sinner should pray to Exalted Allah in favour of the victim of his excesses. In case there is no likelihood of the occurrence of enmity and corruption the sinner may disclose such cases to prevent the excitement of enmity and feelings of revenge.

If the sin relates to some religious issue, e.g., the sin of attributing kufr (disbelief) to a Muslim or Bid'at (innovation) or straying to the follower of the Sunnah, then it is necessary to seek forgiveness from the victim and to inform him of the sin committed against him, as this is a very heinous sin. If this is not possible then Exalted Allah should be involved sincerely with a prayer to make the victim pleased with the sinner.

To sum up the discussion, it is necessary as far as possible, to repay the dues of the claimants where this is not possible, one should turn to Exalted Allah with true and sincere repentance for the sins and excesses committed so that He may by His grace make the victim pleased with and kind to the sinner. However all this depends on the sweet will of Allah. It should however, be hoped that He, in His infinite mercy and compassion, will make the claimant pleased with and kind to the sinner when He finds in the sinner's heart sincerity and a genuine and true desire for forgiveness.

If you have fulfilled the conditions I have prescribed for Repentance and have acted upon to various other items concerning it and have made a firm resolve not to commit sins in future, Allah will forgive your past sins, except sins relating to the rights of Allah and the rights of His servants for which you shall remain liable. This is a very lengthy topic which cannot be discussed in detail on these pages. For more details and useful information you may read the chapters on "The Book of Taubah", "The Book of Nearness to Allah" and "The Book of the Final Goal" of my Book, "Ihyau Uloomiddin". Here I have stated only the more important and necessary topics.

SECTION 2

You must note carefully that it is very difficult to cross safely the valley to Taubah (Repentance). It is full of great risks and losses.

Abu Ishaq Asfar Ayni (RA), a great 'Alim' and righteous saint used to say:

> "I remained praying to Glorious Allah for thirty years to help me in offering sincere and true Repentance, Once if occurred to that I could not attain my objective even after such a long time. I dreamt that someone is saying to me. You feel surprised that your prayer has not been granted even after thirty years. Do you realize what you are seeking? In fact you are imploring Allah to make you His beloved because the Qur'an says: إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ (Indeed Allah loves those who offer Repentance).
>
> It were our past seniors and superiors who remained so much worried about the piety, prosperity and soundness of their hearts!

If a man continues committing sins without offering Repentance in the beginning he becomes hard-hearted but later on he may reach a state of extreme bad luck and wretchedness. May Almighty Allah save us from this.

Do not forget the fate of cursed Iblis[1] and Bal'am Ba'Aur[2]? In the beginning both were sinners but in the end

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[1] Iblis is well known to all as a cursed and condemned enemy of mankind

[2] Bal'am Ba'Aur was a devout saint during the time of Hazrat (Moses) Moosa A. S. When Hazrat Moosa (AS) set off for Jihad, the King

they both fell down in the abyss of کفر (disbelief) and met the fate of eternal loss and destruction. May Exalted Allah have mercy on you and me both. You too should be cautious and sincerely active in this matter, so as to strike at the very root of all sins and lighten your neck from the burden of these sins. It is not necessary so much to be afraid of the hardness of the heart as it is necessary to take care of your condition and state of affairs.

A saint has said that the black of the heart is due to sins and a sign of this black is that the heart becomes deprived of the fear of sins and love of worship and it takes no notice of advice.

It is also very important to note that

No sin, however, minor should be regarded as light, lest you should consider that you are sinless and a repentant person yet you may in reality be committing some major sin. This is a very dangerous situation.

Hazrat Kahmash bin Hasan (RA) has said:

> "I once committed a sin and I have been weeping and lamenting for that sin for the last forty years. On being asked what that sin was he said : Once a brother of mine called on me. I purchased for him fish and offered it to him to eat. When we had finished the meal, I took some dust from my neighbour's wall without

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asked Balam Ba'Aur to call curse on Hazrat Moosa (AS) and his army, but Bal'am rejected the King's request. The King then bribed his wife to ask her husband to curse Hazrat Moosa's army. Forced by his wife, Bal'am cursed Hazrat Moosa's army but his curse was rejected and turned back on himself, with the result that his tongue was drawn out which hung on his chest. He ultimately, died as a disbeliever. May Allah save us from such fate. Amen

his permission for washing my brother's hand.
I also did not ask for the neighbour's pardon
for this act.

(I am, therefore still weeping for this sin).

So, it is necessary to watch your self and call it to account from time to time. You must also not lose time in offering repentance. Do not put off repentance on account of your involvement in the affairs of the world. The world is only an illusion and deception. So implore and invoke Allah with tearful eyes and submission. Remember also the state of your ancestor Hazrat Adam (A.S). Exalted Allah created him with His own hands and infused into his body the spirit of life, sent him to Paradise on the necks of the Angels. However, consider how severely Exalted Allah took him to task for a sin he (AS) had committed. There is a narrative in the form of a dialogue between Exalted Allah and Hazrat Adam (AS):

Allah : O Adam! What kind of a neighbour I was for you ?

Adam (AS) : O Adam! You were a very good Neighbour for me.

Allah : O Adam ! Get out of my neighbourhood and take off from your head the crown of honour and saintliness which I had bestowed upon you. He who disobeys Me cannot live in My neighbour-hood.

It is also related about Hazrat Adam (AS) that he (AS) remained weeping for his sins for two hundred years. Then his (AS) prayer was granted and his sin forgiven. This was the condition of a beloved Prophet of Allah! What will happen to those who have committed and are committing countless sins?

How will the sins of those be forgiven who are insisting on their sins and are drowned in evils and vices?

After having offered Repentance, if a man violates his Repentance and commits some sin, he should repent again. He should think in his heart that he may perhaps die before committing a sin in future. In this way whenever he commits a sin he should offer Repentances again and again without delay. If he has made it his habit to commit sins again and again he should also make a habit to offer Repentance again and again. Just as he does not refrain from committing sins in the same way he should not refrain from offering Repentance, and should never be hopeless of Allah's mercy. Beware, lest Satan should deviate you from the path of Repentance which is indeed the path of virtue and success.

Also take heed of a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

خيارُكُمْ كلّ مفتّن توّاب

That is the best among you is he who is frequently put to trials and ordeals and who most often offers Repentance.

In other words the best of all is that person who takes to Repentance as often as he commits sins and turns to Allah by indulging frequently in Repentance, regrets, remorse and by seeking Allah's forgiveness. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an.

وَمَنْ يَّعْمَلْ سُوْٓءًا اَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهٗ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللّٰهَ يَجِدِ اللّٰهَ غَفُوْرًا رَّحِيْمًا

(سورة النساء: ١١٠)

> And whoever does evil or wrongs his own soul then seeks Allah's pardon, will find Allah Forgiving, Merciful. (4:110)

Consider, what solace and satisfaction these words contain for the sinners:

To sum up, when you have purified yourself from sins and have made a firm resolve in your heart never to commit sins, then you should display to Almighty Allah the firmness and strength of your resolve and try to discharge the rights of the claimants. You should also do your best to discharge the rights of Exalted Allah which are outstanding against you. Even then, if you fail to discharge some of your liabilities and debts the turn for help to Allah with supplication and Repentance that He may, by His mercy, arrange to discharge those outstanding rights pending against you. With a clean body and clean clothes on it you should offer four, Rak'ats of prayer in total seclusion and privacy, seen by none but Allah and then with dust on your head, pity and regret in your heart and weeping bitterly you should blame your self with loud voice the sins you have committed and address your self in this way;

> O my self ! Do you not feel ashamed? Has the time for Repentance not arrived yet? Can you hear the painful punishment of Allah? Is there anyone who can save you from Allah's chastisement?

Address your self in this way, weep bitterly and raising both your hands with tearful eyes towards Exalted and Gracious Allah, invoke Him in this way:

> O Allah! Your fugitive and disobedient has again come to your door, imploring you for

your forgiveness with an humble prayer to pardon his sins. Forgive him and grant him salvation, by Your infinite mercy. Be kind to accept him and cast on him a glance of Your mercy. O Allah, forgive his past sins and protect him from future sins. You have indeed power over all things and You Alone can have mercy on him.

Thereafter, you should recite this Du‘a which is recited in distress and hardships:

يا محلى عظائم الأمور ويا منتهى همة المهمومين، يامن اذا اراد امرا فانما
يقول له كن فيكون احاطت بنا ذنوبنا انت المذخور لها يا مذخور فى
كل شدة كنت ادخرك لهذه الساعة فتب على انك انت التواب الرحيم

This Du‘a (supplication) means :

O You who solve very very difficult problems! O You, who are the last resort for the courage of those who are aggrieved and sad! O You! When you want to do anything you say : Be and it is there! My sins have surrounded me on all sides. You Alone are the store of resources at the time of difficulties and hardships and I consider You for myself a store on such difficult times. Pardon me. It is You alone accept Repentance and show mercy.

Then you should recite this Du’a also with tearful eyes.

يا من لا يشغله شان عن شأن ولا سمع عن سمع ويا من لا تغالطه كثرة
المسائل ويا من لا يبرمه الحاح الملحين اذ قنابردعفوك وحلاوة معرفتك
برحمتك يا ارحم الراحمين انك على كل شئ قدير.

O You, Who can hear one thing without being disturbed by hearing another thing. O You, Who do not fall into confusion by the largeness, of the number of the entreaties made by the beggars. O You Who cannot be forced or pressed by the pressure insistence of the makers of supplication and appeals Let us taste the goodness of Your pardon and the sweetness of Your acquaintance. O You, Who are Most Merciful of all those who show mercy; You have power over all things.

After this you should recite the sacred Darood (blessings) for the Holy Prophet (PBUH) pray for the salvation of all Muslim men and women and worship Allah. Now there is every hope that your Repentance will become true and sincere and you shall be purged of sins as if you were born today. Now Exalted Allah will begin to love you and you shall be favoured by Him with mercy and blessings. Your soul shall become secure from the woe and curse of sins and you shall get relief in this world and also in the Hereafter. Indeed it is only Allah who guides everyone.

وَاللهُ وَلِیّ التوفیق

Chapter Three

THE VALLEY OF OBSTACLES

When you have crossed safely the valley of Repentance and you have taken the path of good deeds, you will face certain obstacles which you have to overcome I have already stated that they are four in number.

THE WORLD IS THE FIRST OBSTACLE

You can overcome this obstacles and defend yourself against it by renouncing and dissociating yourself totally from this world. This is necessary to become indifferent to the charms of the world and to control your desires. There are two reasons for this.

It is necessary that you may be able to indulge in worship and good deeds in the best possible way and put in more and more worship in the way of Allah. By becoming free from worldly affairs, it is easy to improve the quantity as well

as the quality of worship. In other words, man shall devote himself to worship longer and with more attention and concentration. This is not possible when man is too much involved in the affairs of this world. Man remains absorbed in these affairs on account of his desires and lusts and devotes his energies to the attainment of these worldly gains. His body as well as his inner, mental and spiritual faculties also remain involved in the pursuit of material gains of the world. These stand in the way of worship, because man has only one heart which he can concentrate only on one topic to the exclusion of other topics. The world and the Hereafter can be compared to two co-wives. If one is pleased, the other will remain displeased. The world and the Hereafter may also be compared to the east and the west. By going to the east a man becomes farther and farther from the west and vice versa. It is therefore quite true to say that absorption in the worldly affairs makes man indifferent to worship and devotion. Hazrat Abu Darda (RAA) has narrated : I tried my best to combine trade with worship but simply failed in my effort. I therefore, accepted worship and renounced trade.

Hazrat Umar (RAA) has said: If it had been possible to combine trade with worship, I would surely have been successful in this scheme, because Exalted Allah has granted me power as well as leniency. This is however not possible. So it is better to lose that which is temporary and perishable and that is trade.

I have said that to desire the world and to be absorbed worldly in its affairs stand in the way of worship. This is proved by a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH):

من احب دنياه أضر بآخرته ومن أحب آخرته أضر بدنياه فآثرو ما يبقى على يفنى

One who loves his Hereafter harms his world.
So prefer what is lasting to that which is perishable and temporary.

Thus, if a man remains searching both outwardly and inwardly for worldly temptations, charms and gains, he cannot do full justice to worship. On the other hand, if he renounces the world both outwardly and inwardly, he can devote himself to worship with much better concentration, and all his limbs and parts of the body will help and cooperate with him in worship. Hazrat Salman, the Persian (RAA) has said:

ان العبد اذا زهد فى الدنيا استنار قلبه بالحكمة وتعاونت اعضاؤه فى العبادة

When the servant of Allah becomes indifferent to the world, his heart becomes illuminated with the light of wisdom and his limbs cooperate with him in worship.

The second reason for being indifferent to the world and for its renunciation is that this leads to an increase in the value and worth of the good deeds. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

ركعتان من رجل عالم زاهد قلبه خير واحب الى ا لله عزوجل من عبادة المتعبدين الى آخر الدهر ابدا سرمدا

Exalted Allah likes much more the two Rak'ats offered by an 'Alim' with piety in his heart than the worship of all the worshippers till eternity.

When the value of worship is enhanced by this indifference to the world and its charms then those who are

engaged in worship should keep themselves aloof from the affairs of the world.

This indeed increases the worth and value of deeds.

THE MEANING OF ZUHD (ABSTENTION) AND ITS REALITY

In the opinion of the Ulama of the Ahl-e-Sunnah wal-Jama'at ZUHD is of two kinds :

1. ZUHD MAQDOOR and
2. ZUHD GHAIR MAQDOOR

Zuhd Maqdoor is that Zuhd which a man has power to adopt and Zuhd Ghair Maqdoor is that Zuhd which a man does not possess the requisite power to adopt. Zuhd Maqdoor is the combination of three parts:

A man should not hanker after any worldly object which he does not possess.

He has with him some worldly objects he should give it in charity.

The should have no desire for these worldly objects.

A man who possesses these three qualities will be called
زاهد من الدنيا (a man abstaining from the world).

Zuhd Maqdoor i.e. Zuhd that lies within the power of a man, is in fact a beginning of Zuhd Ghair Maqdoor which does not lie within the power of a man. When a man adopts Zuhd Maqdoor by ignoring those worldly objects which he does not possess and by giving in charity those objects which he possesses, nor does he have any desire for them in his heart, his heart will God willing become indifferent to and cold from

the worldly objects, on account of fear of punishment and hope for reward. This is real Zuhd and this is the most difficult of the three parts, that a man should banish from his heart all desires for worldly objects, charms and temptations. Some men display Zuhd outworldly but remain absorbed in desires for the world inwardly. Such men in fact remain in great torture and distress. The crux of the matter is that the love of the world should be banished from the heart altogether. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :-

تِلْكَ الدَّارُ الْآخِرَةُ نَجْعَلُهَا لِلَّذِينَ لَا يُرِيدُونَ عُلُوًّا فِي الْأَرْضِ وَلَا فَسَادًا .
(سورة القصص : ٨٣)

That is the house of the Hereafter which we assign to those who seek neither oppression in the earth nor corruption. (28:83)

The condition laid down in this verse for Paradise is that shall be awarded to those who seek neither oppression nor corruption in the earth. It does not refer to those, who do not desire or do not actually commit oppression or corruption in the world, as there is no question of such persons to be awarded Paradise.

Allah has said in the Qur'an at another place :

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الْآخِرَةِ نَزِدْ لَهُ فِي حَرْثِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهِ مِنْهَا وَمَا لَهُ فِي الْآخِرَةِ مِنْ نَصِيبٍ.

Whoso desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We give him increase in its harvest. And whose desires the harvest of the world We give him thereof and he has no portion in the Hereafter. (42:20)

And Allah has said :

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعَاجِلَةَ عَجَّلْنَا لَهُ فِيهَا مَا نَشَاءُ لِمَنْ نُرِيدُ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَا لَهُ جَهَنَّمَ يَصْلَاهَا مَذْمُومًا مَدْحُورًا. (سورة بنى اسرائيل : ١٨)

Whose desires the fleeting life (of the world), We hasten for him in that which We will for whom We please. And after that We have appointed for him Hell; he will endure the heat thereof condemned, rejected. (17:18)

Allah has said next:

وَمَنْ أَرَادَ الْآخِرَةَ وَسَعَىٰ لَهَا سَعْيَهَا وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ كَانَ سَعْيُهُمْ مَشْكُورًا . (سورة بنى اسرائيل : ١٩)

And whoso desires the Hereafter and strives for that with the necessary striving, while he is a believer, for such their striving finds favour (with their Lord) (17:19).

Consider how Exalted Allah has based the decision on desire and longing. It is therefore necessary for a man to relinquish the world at the very outset. If man strictly adheres to two practices. it is hoped that he shall totally banish from his heart the desire and love for the world. These two practices are that man should not try to hanker after those worldly objects which he does not possess and should give up in charity what he possesses.

WHY RELINQUISHING THE WORLD AND DISTRIBUTING ITS RESOURCES ARE QUITE EASY

These are the reasons as to why it is quite easy to relinquish the world. Man should remember the harms and losses dur to acquiring the World. The learned Shaikhs have different views on this issue.

One saint has said that he relinquished the world, because it contains many distresses and tortures and it is very much short lived. All those who desire it remain miserable, disgraced and devoid of honour.

My Shaikh has said that the foregoing statements also reflect in some degree on the love of the world. If a man complains against being separated from something it means that he really desires to meet that thing. Again, a man gives up something because he does not want to share it with others, but if he gets that thing for his exclusive possession he will accept it. What my Shaikh (RA) has said about giving up the world is more right and correct. He (RA) has said that the world is an enemy of Allah while you are a beloved of Allah. As such, he who is a beloved of anyone cannot be a friend of the enemy of his lover.

He has said the world is like filthy, dead and rotten meat. See how despicable is its outcome. Its best and most delicious foods turn into foul-smelling excrement. These things of this world have been decorated and made attractive from the outside, but the real substance concealed within them is awfully hateful and loathing.

Those who are oblivious of the Hereafter hanker after its outward show and charms and are deceived, but the wise abhor the world and its temptations.

THE LEGAL (SHARA'EE) POSITION OF ZUḤD (ABSTENTION)

Is it an obligatory (فرض), essential (واجب) or an optional (نفل)duty to practice Zuhd?

You should know that in the opinion of the Ahl-e-Sunnah wal-Jama'at Zuhd (abstinence) is practiced in the matter of what's unlawful as well as what is lawful. It is an

obligatory duty to adopt Zuhd in respect of what is unlawful. Zuhd in respect of what is lawful is an optional duty. For those who are steadfast on the path of Deen what is unlawful is as hateful as dead meat and filthy objects. They may take from such hateful things only the minimum quantity needed and that too when compelled by extremely pressing circumstances; otherwise they cannot even cast glance at undesirable things.

It is the dignity of the Abdals (spiritual personalities of a very high order) to refrain even from lawful things. In their sight even lawful things are like dead meat from which they may take to the minimum extent needed under very compelling circumstances. But for this they do not even touch such despicable objects. As for unlawful things, these are for them like embers of fire. They can never think of turning to such things. This is an exposition of how the hearts become impervious to the thought of worldly objects and not even the slightest desire is born in the hearts to acquire these worldly gains and resources.

A question may arise in this connection: How is it possible that the world so exquisitely embellished and made attractive and charming can become equal to dead meat and rotten things in the sight of men who have been created so weak in their nature and temperament?

This question may be answered by saying that those whom Allah Almighty assists and enlightens by His mercy, become aware of the reality of the world and its dangers and pitfalls. As for these worldly men they are quite in dark about this reality and are deeply charmed by its outward attractions and temptations. For example, a man prepares some sweet dish with all its ingredients but puts in it a small drop of poison. There are two men one of whom has seen the mixing of the poison but the other one has not seen that. Now this sweet dish beautifully decorated is placed before both. The

man who knows that the dish is poisonous will never touch it but will consider it to be worse than fire. He will never be attracted by its outward charm and beauty.

As for the other fellow who does not know that the dish contains poison he will not refrain from tasting it. On the other hand, he will regard the other fellow as a fool for ignoring the tasteful dish and its attractive appearances.

This is exactly the example of the unlawful things of this world. Those who are wise, possess foresight and spiritual insight regard these things as deadly poison, but worldly men rush to them with lust and desire.

If the sweet dish does not contain poison but it was mixed with dirty things like man's saliva, dust and stone pebbles, wise and discerning men having knowledge of this adulteration will hate it and will not eat it except in pressing need. However, those who are not aware of the reality of the sweet dish will rush at it and try to get it for tasting it.

This is an example of the lawful things of the world and of men both wise and foolish. Both are human beings possessing the same natural faculties, but with different sense and understanding one group is aware of the reality of these worldly things and the other group is quite in dark about it. If both these come to know somehow the reality of things both shall behave in like manner. The whole issue revolves round knowledge or ignorance about the reality of things.

This shows that the difference lies in the quality of foresight, understanding and wisdom and not on the human nature which is common to all. All these details will be very useful for those who possess sense of justice and spiritual insight. وا لله ولى التوفيق ومنه الهداية

Some may say that the resources of the world are necessary for men to pass their lives in this world. How can they abstain from using these necessaries of life? It may be noted carefully that whatever has been stated about Zuhd (abstinence) pertains to the possession and use of useless and superfluous things of life. The practice of Zuhd has been advised about things which are not indispensable for life in this world. None can advise against using things which are necessary to maintain health so necessary for keeping body and soul together and for devotion and worship in the path of Exalted Allah.

If Exalted Allah so wills, He can enable man to live on the earth without any means of life just as He has created the Angels who are living without any visible means of living. On the other hand, if He so desires, He can make your life depend on certain resources and means of living. Again, if He so wills, He can make available to you these resources through your own labour and earning or may provide them for you from somewhere about the source of which you may not have the slightest idea. He has said in the Holy Qur'an:

مَنْ يَتَّقِ اللهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا وَّيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ (سورة الطلاق: ٢-٣)

> And whosoever fears Allah, Allah shall appoint a way out for him, and will provide for him from (a place) about which he has no expectation. (65:2-3)

Thus, when Exalted Allah has Himself promised to provide man with the necessary means of life, it is not necessary for you to feel worried about it, as Allah shall Himself place it at your disposal. However, if you are not courageous enough to place your trust in Allah and feel that you have to earn your living, you should earn it not with the

intention of satisfying your desires and lusts. You should earn it with the intention that your earnings will enable you to maintain life and to help you in worshipping Allah. If you make this intention, your labour in earning the resources of the world will become a form of worship, deserving reward. Thus, you shall receive the full recompense for زهد عن الدنيا (Abstinence from the world).

MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH THE PEOPLE AND MIXING WITH THEM

So far I have mentioned the first of the four obstacles, i.e., the world, that stand in the way of worship. The second obstacle relates to the people of the world. May Allah bestow on all of us, by His grace power and, help to worship Him. Amen.

Love of seclusion and keeping oneself aloof from the public are also necessary for worshippers. This is necessary for two reasons:

1. The people generally stand in the way of Allah's worship.

A saintly man once stated: Once I passed by a group of men who were busy in discussion about something, while one of them was sitting aloof from them. When I wanted to talk to him he said that he preferred rehearsing Allah's name. When I told him that he was sitting alone, he replied that he was sitting with his Lord, Allah, and the two recording Angels "Kiraman Katibeen". When I asked him who was superior among those who were carrying out the discussion, he replied that superior is one whom Allah grants superiority. I asked him about the straight path. In reply he pointed to the heavens with his hand and went away saying: O Allah, Your creatures often disturb

me during my rehearsal and remembrance and interrupt me in my rehearsal.

This shows that the people often divert worshippers also from the path of worship and involve them in other occupations. In this way they cast virtuous men into the ditch of vices and destruction Hazrat Hatim Asam (RA) has said :

I demanded from the people five things, but could get none. I asked them to adopt Zuhd and devotion but they could not do this. Then I asked them if they themselves could not do so they should at least help me but they failed to do this also.

Then I again said to them : Will you agree with me if I engage myself in worship and devotion?

They did not agree with me. Then I asked them not to stop me, nor to stand in my way. They refused to do so and created difficulties in the way of my worship and devotion.

Lastly, I asked them not to involve me in worldly lusts and desires and in disobeying Allah and not to become displeased with me if I did not cooperate with them. They did not agree to this also. I, therefore parted with them and devoted myself to Zuhd, worship and devotion away from them.

My Dear Brothers! You must note carefully that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has told us everything about the reality of privacy and seclusion its signs and its time and the conditions of the people of this age. He (PBUH) has commanded us to take to separation and seclusion in these times. He (PBUH) knows better the interests and advantage of the Ummah, He (PBUH) was our greatest well-wisher, He (PBUH) preferred our welfare to that of his own. So, if you find your times the same as the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has described, then it is binding on you to accept his commands

and act upon them. Do not be under an impression that you yourself understand what is good or bad for you. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) knew better than all what is in our best interest in our times. So, do not beguile yourself by false excuses, otherwise no excuse will be accepted from you in the Hereafter and you will- God forbid be exposed to loss and destruction at that critical time.

The conditions and signs of the later times which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has mentioned hare come to us through an authentic narrative of Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin al-'Aas (RAA) in which he (PBUH) has described in clear words the time when one should take to separation and seclusion. So Hazrat Abdullah bin Amr bin al-'Aas (RAA) has narrated as follows:

Once we were present in an assembly of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). The Holy Prophet (PBUH) began to talk about the days of corruption and disturbances and said: When you see that people break their promises and pledge, betray their trusts, fight with one another and become like this (entangling together the fingers of both his hands).... I then said: O Messenger of Allah, may I sacrifice my life for you, what should I do in such a time? The Holy Prophet (PBUH) replied saying :

فالزم بيتك وأملك على لسانك وخذما تعرف ودع ما تنكر وعليك بامر الخاصة ودع عنك امر العامة.

Remain within the bounds of your house, control your tongue, adopt what you know and give up what you do not know; establish contact with the private sector and ignore the general public.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in another Hadith; Arabic i.e. Those will be the days of corruption and unrest. The people asked: O Messenger of Allah! What are the days of corruption and unrest? He (PBUH) answered: The days when people will be afraid even of their own companions and collegues.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood (RAA) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) addressed. Hazrat Haris bin Umairah, saying:

ان برفع عن عمرك فسياتي عليك زمان كثيرة خطباة وقليل علماءه،
كثيرة سوالة قليل معطوه الهوى فيه قاعد العلم

If you are living by that time then a time will come upon you when there will be a large number of lecturers and preachers but only a few scholars and learned men, a large number of beggars but only a few charitable persons. In those times learning and knowledge will be subordinate to desires and lusts.

Hazrat Haris bin Umairah (RA) asked: O Messenger of Allah (PBUH)! When will that time come? The Holy Prophet (PBUH) replied saying :

اذا امتيت الصلوة وقبلت الشاء وبياع الدين بعرض يسير من الدنيا
فالنجاء النجاء، ثم ويحك النجاء.

When the prayers will be missed, bribery will become a common affair and Deen (Faith) will be sold at a very little price of worldly gains. At such a time you should seek safety and seclusion from the general public.

We are seeing clearly with our own eyes all those things and conditions which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has predicted in these Ahadith about the times following his (PBUH) time. We should, therefore try to seek safety from these evils.

It was the practice of our past pious seniors and veterans that at such times of corruption they used to keep themselves aloof from the general public. They advised others to follow the same course as they followed during their secluded lives. There is no doubt that they were more farsighted and discerning and sympathetic with the people than we. The present age is worse than their age. Hazrat Imam Ghazzali (RA) has given this account about the fifth century A.H. Now consider what is the condition of this age. How necessary is it to seek safety from the evils of the times, to reform ourselves and take to privacy and seclusion?

Hazrat Yusuf bin Asbat (RA) has quoted Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA), as saying:

وا لله الذى لا اله الا هو لقد حلت العزولة فى هذا الزمان.

> By Allah, except whom there is no God, privacy and secluded life have become lawful during these times.

I (Imam Ghazzali - RA) say that if privacy and seclusion had been lawful in those days, then they have become obligatory during our times. Another saying has been reported from Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA), He wrote in a letter to Hazrat 'Abbad (RA) :

After Hamd (praise) and Salat (blessing)!

You are living in an age from which the noble companions (RAA) used to seek refuge with Allah, So have I heard. They were more learned than we and we are inferior to them in knowledge and patience and in cooperation in righteousness and doing good. Vices among the people and corruption in these times are on the increase. What will be our state during these times?

Hazrat Sufyan bin 'Ayni (RA) has said that he requested Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) to give him some advice. The latter said: Reduce your contacts with the people. I (i.e. Hazrat 'Ayni) said: May Allah have mercy on you. Holy Prophet (PBUH) has asked us to increase our contacts with the people, because every believer will intercede for another believer. Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) replied, saying: I feel sure that if you have ever received some harm from any one, it must have come from one of your own acquaintances.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) passed away after saying these words. Hazrat Sufyan bin 'Ayni (RA) has reported: After his death I saw Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) in a dream and requested him to give me some advice. He advised me, saying: Reduce your contacts with the people as far as possible, as it is very difficult to get rid of them. Then he recited these two couplets of Arabic poetry:

جزى ا لله عنا الخير من ليس بيننا   ولا بينه ودولا يتعارف
فما مسناهم ولا نالنا اذى   من الناس الامن نور ونعرف

May Allah grant him good reward with whom I have had no contacts and whom I do not know at all. This is because the troubles and distresses that befall us are from our own acquaintances and colleagues.

Hazrat Fuzail bin Ayaz (RA) has said :

هذا زمان احفظ لسانك واخف مكانك وعالج قلبك وخذ ما تعرف ودع ما تنكر.

These are times when you should hold your tongue and conceal the whereabouts of your house and remedy your heart (for its reform). Act upon what you know and give up what you do not know.

Again, Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) has said: This is an age when we should confine ourselves to the bounds of our houses hold our tongues from speaking and live with contentment till death

Hazrat Daood Tai (RA) has said :

صم من الدنيا واجعل فطرك الآخرة وفر من الناس فرارك من الاسد

Observe fast from the joys and temptations of the world and break that fast in the Hereafter. Run away from the public as you would run away from the lion.

And Hazrat Abu Ubaid (RA) has said:

I have had interviews with many wise men and intellectuals and have had discussions with them. They all advised me, saying : You can have some value in the sight of Allah only when you have a desire to reduce your contacts with the people and when none should recognize you.

Anyway, such narratives are in such large numbers that they cannot be recorded in a small book like this. I have

compiled all such narratives in a separate book under the title: اخلاق الابـرار والنجـاة مـن الاشـرار (The morals of the righteous men and safety from the wicked ones). Only a small indication is sufficient for the wise.

Another reason for preferring a life of retirement is that the people spoil the worship of the worshippers, unless they are protected by Exalted Allah. By having regular contacts with the general public the worshippers become exposed to many vices like self-deception, self-esteem, ostentation and pride.

Hazrat Yahya bin Ma'az (RA) has said: رؤية الناس بساطة الرياء. (Contacts with the public is the mat of ostentation). That is why, our senior saints and the righteous men had given up contacts with the people for fear of ostentatio and fame.

It is reported that Hazrat Harum bin Hayyan (RA) requested Hazrat Owais Qarni (RA) to be kind to him by allowing him to meet and see him (i.e. Hazrat Qarni RA). Hazrat Qarni (RA) said to him : I behave with you in a manner which is much better for you than you meeting and seeing me. It is that I pray to Allah for you in your absence. There is a Hadith to the effect that a prayer is accepted more promptly which is submitted to Allah for the sake of a Muslim in his absence. In addition, there is a possibility of committing the sin of show and ostentation by increasing contacts and interviews with the general public:

Someone advised Hazrat Sulaiman Khawas (RA) to pay a visit to Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) who had come to the city. Hazrat Khawas (RA) said that he would prefer meeting Satan to meeting Hazrat Adham (RA). The people felt very much offended by this reply. Hazrat Khawas (RA) clarified the matter by saying : In meeting Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) I fear show and ostentation. On the other hand, if

I meet Satan, I shall try to protect myself from his treachery and seduction and there will be no fear of ostentation.

My Shaikh (RA) once happened to meet some accomplished man of God. They both sat together talking to each other for a long time. When they got up to depart they made a prayer to Allah, My Shaikh said that he had not had an opportunity of such an encouraging and hopeful sitting ever before. On hearing this that man of God said: This was a very risky sitting for me. I never before had a chance of attending such a risky sitting. You were telling me very good points with due formality on the basis of your knowledge and learning. I too was doing likewise. This must have involved us in the sin of show and ostentation. On hearing this my Shaikh (RA) wept bitterly for a long time until he fainted.

Just consider! When this is the outcome of meetings between saints who were peerless in abstinence worship and righteousness what will be the outcome of such meetings taking place among the general public, worldly men, and the careless ones. Bear in mind also that in this age corruption and destruction have widely spread everywhere and the people have become very neglectful in the matter of worship and devotion. These irresponsible people divert your attention from worship and involve you in useless pursuits in such a way that you cannot worship Allah or if you worship Him, they spoil your worship with show and ostentation, until you lose everything.

It is therefore, necessary for you to keep yourself aloof from the people and to seek refuge with Allah from the mischief of the public. It is Allah Alone who can save us from all these vices, by His mercy.

A question arises as to what is the injunction of the Sharee'ah about a life of retirement and what are its limits.

You should note that in so far as a life of retirement is concerned, there are two groups of the people.

One group consists of persons who are devoid of learning and wisdom. They are neither scholars nor rulers and the general public stands in no need of them in any matter. This group should remain aloof from the public, except to the extent needed for the Juma and Eed Prayers, the Hajj or for attending religious assemblies, or for limited contacts with the people for earning livelihood. If these people desire to go in total retirement and isolation, without engaging themselves in any worldly and religious occupations and without appearing before the people even for the Juma and Eed prayers and if they consider the life of conducive to their benefit and interest, this is lawful only with certain conditions: These conditions are :

1. To leave the township and go to live in a place where the injunctions regarding Juma and Eed prayers cease to apply to them, For example, they should retire to a mountain peak or to a desolate unpopulated land, far away from the din of the population. Certain saints had left their home and hearth for distant unpopulated lands only for this reason.

2. The second basic condition is that such a person should be quite sure that even the slightest contacts with the public will prove very harmful to him. On this basis, if he does not attend the congregational prayers of Juma (Fridays) and the Eeds, he shall be considered as disabled for these prayers.

I have myself seen in the Holy city of Makkah certain Shaikhs that they did not attend the congregational prayers held near the House of Allah, although they enjoyed good health and ability for this.

Once I asked a Shaikh to tell me the reason for this behaviour. He told me the same reason which I have mentioned in the beginning that even the slightest contacts with the public may prove harmful to them[1].

I, therefore maintain that there is no harm in this behaviour for disabled person, as Exalted Allah is fully Aware of the excuses and disabilities of everyone and is also Aware of the secrets of the chests. ا لله عليم بذات الصدور

It is, however, much better and more preferable that one should take care to join the congregational prayers on Fridays and on other days and on prayer times. One should however, avoid all avoidable contacts with the public, if one thinks that public contacts are harmful even in such circumstances one should leave the townships and retire to such far off places where the injunctions of the Sharee'ah cease to apply. It is however not lawful at all to miss the congregational prayers on Fridays and other days while one is residing in towns and cities. (The advice to adopt total retirement and isolation from the society is given by those from whom the people need no advice about their worldly or religious affairs).

The other group consists of those Shaikhs and scholars who are leaders in the matter of Deen and expounders of the injunctions of the Sharee'ah. It is among their obligatory duties

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[1] It may be noted here very well that it is not lawful in those times to miss congregational prayers on Fridays, Eed and other days. Whatever has been written here is that personal and specific practices of certain saints which can never be taken as an excuse to give up congregational prayers during his whole lifetime. How can it be lawful for any other person to give up congregational prayers? All that is needed is that public contacts should not be maintained is that public contacts should not be maintained, except in unavoidable circumstances and every effort should be made to reform one's own life, conduct and character. Allah knows best

to serve and preach Deen by means of their sermons and practices. It is not lawful for such Shaikhs and scholars to take to a life of retirement and go into isolation. Its binding on them to live among the public and guide their thinking and working in the matter of their Deen. They have to refute with their convincing argumentation and to invalidate therewith the argument and attacks of the misguided enemies of Islam. They should always keep themselves occupied with enforcing what is right and forbidding what is wrong and clarifying these issues where necessary. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

اذا ظهر البدع وسكت العالم فعليه لعنة ا لله

> When Bid'at (Innovations) prevail in a place and the Ulama remain silent on them, then Allah's curse shall fall on them.

Anyway, it is not right for the Ulama and the religious scholars to take to a life of retirement and seclusion. Hazrat Abu Bakr bin Fork (RA) said that once he decided to isolate himself from the people and devote himself to worship for this purpose he sat on a mountain peak where he heard a secret voice, saying :

O Abu Bakr! When Exalted Allah has made you an authority of guidance for the people, why have you come here and have left them? I then gave up the life of retirement and came back home.

Mamoon bin Ahmad has also reported likewise that once Hazrat Ustaz Abu Ishaq Asfar Ayni (RA) addressed the worshippers and the retired saints living on a hill in Lebanon: Thus he said:

O you ! Who are living on dried crusts of bread and grass and who have come here leaving behind the Ummah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in the custody of the innovators and the straying heretics! To this they replied, saying: We do not have the courage and ability to live among the people. Exalted Allah has granted you the requisite stamina and courage to live among them and reform them. Thereafter he (RA) compiled a book under the title "جامع للخفي والجلي" (A collection of what is secret and what is apparent).

However, these saintly scholars were peerless in learning as well as in actions in patience, modesty and they knew the very subtle points concerning the Hereafter. Take heed that such scholars as they guide the people on the path of Deen must pay attention to two very difficult issues; Viz.:

1. To take to patience endurance, and have the ability to solve problems with research and insight and to seek always Allah's help for this

2. To maintain outwardly contacts with the public, talk to them, if they desire to meet them, if they seek interview and to entertain and treat them with due regard. On the other hand, if they keep away from them and avoid to talk to them, then advantage should be taken of this opportunity they should help those who are engaged on doing good deeds and try to stop them from lewdness and prohibited acts. In this matter they should oppose and disobey them and may scold them, if necessary.

In short they should discharge all their due rights e.g. visiting the sick, inquiring after their well-being, etc. They

should try to meet their needs as far as possible and should not expect from them praise and return nor should they have in their hearts any hope for this. They should hesitate in accepting any gifts from them, but they should give them something, if they can afford this. They should put up with them if they cause them any distress, behave with them amicably and cheerfully, appear before them with a good appearance and in rightly clothes and conceal from them their own needs and should themselves try to satisfy the needs of the people. They should have no demands from the public. They should also be trying alongside to reform and ameliorate their own condition. They should offer every day some optional prayers and devote themselves to other righteous deeds for this purpose.

Hazrat Umar Farooq (RAA) has narrated;

ان نمت الليل لأضعين نفسي وان نمت النهار لاضعين الرعية فكيف بين هاتين.

If I sleep in the night I lose my own self and if I sleep in the day I lose and ignore the affairs of the subjects. How can then I take rest under these circumstances?

Just see how Hazrat Umar Farooq (RAA) took care of his own self by devoting himself to the affairs and problems of the subjects during the day time and how he (RA) devoted himself to the worship of his creator, Allah, during the night time! The genuine and righteous Ulama should also follow the above mentioned programmes of good deeds. On this topic I have composed some poetry:

فان كنت في هدى الائمة راغبا
فوطن على ان تنتحيك الوقائع

If you want to inculcate in yourself the character of the senior Ulama then inculcate in your heart the power of enduring the vicissitudes of the times.

بنفس وقور عند كل ملمة
وقلب صبور وهو في الصدر مانع

In times of every trouble and torture create in your heart softness, power of resistance and defence, even though your heart itself may be causing hindrances in this path.

لسانك مخزون وطرفك ملجم
وسرك مكتوم لدى الرب ذائع

Let your tongue be confined to your mouth and let the eyes remain under your control and none except Allah should be aware of your secrets.

وذكرك مخمور وبابك مغلق
ولغرك بسام وبطنك جائع

There should be no talk about you (among the public) and your door should remain closed. Your appearance should be pleasant and smiling, even though you may be in a state of starvation.

وقلبك مجروح وسوقك كاسد
وفضلك مدفون وطعمك شائع

Let your heart be wounded with the love of Allah, your business be in a state of depression, your accomplishments and qualifications be buried and yourself exposed

continuously to the comments and taunts of public.

وفى يوم انت جارع غصه
من الدهر والاخوان والقلب طائع

Patiently suppress your anger for the troubles and tortures which you face from your own kith and Kin every day; yet let your heart remain obedient to Allah.

نهارك شغل الناس من غير منة
وليلك سوق غاب عنه طلائع

Let your days pass in the service of the people without laying any obligation on them and let your nights pass in remembering the times of meeting Allah and the people should be unaware of this worship of yours.

فدونك هذا الليل خذ ذريعة
ليوم عبوس عز فيه الذرائع

So, you should make this night a cause of success on that day when all other means of salvation will disappear.

It is, however, necessary that your self and your body should remain with the people but your heart should remain aloof from them. However this is a very tough affair and it requires great patience and perseverance to pass these difficult travels of life.

If was about this phase of life that my Shaikh (RA) used to say يا بنى عش مع اهل زمانك ولا تقتدبهم (O my son, live with your family but do not follow in their footsteps. He (RA) also

said: It is a very difficult situation that one has to pass his life among the living and follow in the footsteps of the dead).

It is narrated from Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood (RA): خالط الناس وازيلهم (mix with the people, but do not spoil your faith).

A time may come when the Ummah shall become plagued with corruption and trials; the people will become degenerated in their faith, turning away from it and having no trust in the words and promises of a Muslim. They will have no concern with the Ulama, but will feel disgusted with them, nor will they consider if necessary to do anything for the sake of Deen. Then these vices will find access to the educated persons also. In such conditions it will become necessary for an Alim also to take to a life of retirement and isolation. He should keep aloof from the public and stop preaching Deen as he has an excuse for this in these unfavourable circumstances.

The time about which. I have described these conditions is in my opinion, my own time. It is therefore, necessary in these times to live in isolation and away from the public. We seek steadfastness from Allah. We have trust only in Him.

Try to understand well the details I have briefly mentioned here because the people are generally ignorant and they commit serious mistakes in this matter.

A man may point out the injunctions contained in the following Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) about social living:

عليكم بالجماعة فان يد الله على الجماعة وان الشيطان يأكل الشاذة والناجية والقاصية والفاذة.

It ..is necessary for you to live with the community of the Muslims because Allah's help descends on the community. Satan is like a wolf for mankind. The wolf kills and eats the sheep straying away from the flock that either goes ahead of the flock, goes far off from it lags behind.

ان الشيطان مع الفذوهو مع الإثنين ابعد

Satan follows closely a man who is all alone but he remain away from him when there are two men.

What meaning should be understood from these Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)?

It may be pointed out in reply to this question that there are other Ahadith also concerning the other aspects of this issue.

الزم بيتك وعليك بالخاصة ودع امر العامة

Keep to the bounds of your house, take interest in your particular affairs and give up the affairs of the general public. (That is avoid mixing with the general public).

In this Hadith, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has forbidden to maintain contacts with the general public. There is no contradiction between this Hadith and the Ahadith mentioned earlier. I shall try, with Allah's mercy' to reconcile the meanings of the two sets of the Ahadith.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said: عليكم بالجماعة. There are three possible interpretations of these words.

1. جماعة (Group) means the injunctions of the Sharee'ah and in so far as Deen and its injunctions are concerned, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has advised against taking a path other than the path of the group of the Muslims. This is because the Ummah of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) can never become unanimous on error and on going against the Islamic Sharee'ah. It is an act of straying and heinous error to take a course in any matter which is against the consensus of the Ummah. The above Hadith is referring to this point. With this exception, it is not unlawful to take to a life of retirement and seclusion in the interest of the safety and security of one's faith. This way of life does not come within the meaning of this Hadith.

2. It is quite likely that taking to a social life may refer to the injunction about attending the congregational prayers on Fridays, Eed and other days. These congregations display the strength grandeur and greatness of Islam and the Muslims and throw fear and awe into the hearts of the infidels. These gatherings are points of attraction for the mercy and grace of Exalted Allah.

It is not lawful for a retired person living in isolation to refrain from joining the assemblies of the Muslims for the Friday, Eed and other congregational prayers. There is, however, no harm in taking to retired life and avoiding contacts with the people in other activities of life as this way of retired life saves one from many vices.

3. It is possible that the injunction contained in (عليم بالجماعة) was issued for that period when corruption and disturbances had not yet appeared and for such men as were weak in their belief and had not yet become well grounded in their faith.

As for those who are firm in their belief and faith and possess deep insight in religious matters the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has sternly warned them against the times of corruption and disturbances. It is appropriate for such people to retire into isolation because there are many evils in community life. They should not however, cut themselves off from the society in the matter of the Islamic injunctions concerning congregational prayers like the Friday and Eed prayers etc. (If a man feels that he can save his faith only by living in total isolation from the public life he has the option to retire to a lonely place where the injunctions regarding congregational prayers will cease to apply to him.)

I feel sure that Exalted Allah shall surely make available opportunities for congregational prayers on Fridays. Eed and other days to those who are men of insight but have adopted a life of retirement for the sake of their faith. It must however, be noted that Islamic gatherings for congregational prayers are very important in the sight of Exalted Allah and cannot be abandoned except in very unavoidable and exceptional circumstances. I have heard about many Abdals (spiritual personalities of a very high order) that they never miss their congregational prayers, wherever they may be. It is related about them that they can, by Allah's mercy cover any distance by putting only one step by virtue of their super nature power granted to them by Allah. They are saints enjoying a very high status and spiritual bounties from Almighty Allah. They are highly honoured and dignified persons of the Divine Court. This is Allah's special gift which He bestows upon whom He wills.

May Glorious Allah, by His grace reform the lives of those also who are indifferent to the affairs of the Hereafter. He may also help those who are desirous of ameliorating their lives. Leaving this topic here now I revert to the topic of retiring into a life of isolation and seclusion.

With reference to this topic one may refer to this Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH):

رهبانية امتى الجلوس فى المساجد

> The monastic life of my Ummah is that the Muslims should keep attending the mosques frequently.

This Hadith prohibits the Ummah from going into a retired life and exhorts them to make the mosques their resort instead of retiring to some lonely desert or mountain.

You may note that the injunction contained in this Hadith also pertains to that age when corruption and disturbances had not yet appeared. I have already mentioned this aspect of the question earlier.

Another meaning of this Hadith is that a man may take a mosque as his resort, but he should avoid contacts with the people and should not also meddle with their affairs. He may be outwardly with the people but he should remain away from them inwardly and in reality. This is the aim of isolation and retirement which cannot be attained only by keeping the visible body away from the general public.

Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) has said:

كن واحدا جامعيًا ومن ربك
ذا أنُس ومن الناس وحشيا

> Keep yourself aloof from the people yet remain attached to the community. Maintain friendship with your Lord, yet keep away from the people.

Someone may put this question:

What do you think about the Ulama of the religious institutions and the Sufis and Shaikhs of the monasteries. They do not lead a life of isolation and retirement as you advise, even though they are mindful of devotion and of the affairs of the Hereafter.

You should know that the path taken by these respected Ulama Shaikhs and the Sufis is the best path for them because this path contains two advantages:

1. They remain away from the society of the people, their association and from their worldly affairs.

2. They are able to attend congregational prayers on Fridays, Eeds and other days which form symbols of Islam. (Thus, these people enjoy the benefits of a retired life. Actual retired life is not, therefore necessary for them).

3. They remain safe form the harms inherent in having contacts with the people. They are a source of benefit and blessings for the Muslims in general. Their nice moral character and conduct become a model for others to follow.

That is why many religious scholars and saints preferred to live among the people to enable the latter to benefit from them. They cause no harm to anyone. On the other hand, the people follow them in their righteous deeds, as they serve as models for the general public.

Another question may arise in this behalf. Should those who have successfully completed the various stages of تصوف (Mysticism) live in the company of those who are still under training in this course or should the trained and qualified ones live in isolation of the latter group?

If the candidates still under training are following fully and satisfactorily the conduct and ways of the past Sufis and Saints, there is no harm for the qualified Sufis to live in the company of those under training. It is not advisable for them to live in isolation of this group of trainees, because they will be of help to their senior Shaikhs and Sufis.

I have heard about the group of worshippers of the mountain of Labanon that they cooperate with and advise, one another in the virtues of patience and righteousness. So these Sufis under training should also be treated like the worshippers of the mountain of Labanon. It is necessary for the qualified Sufis and devotees to keep aloof from these trainees and confine themselves to their corners, if the trainees deviate from the path of the past Sufis and try, through corruption to create differences in the practices and procedures of the veterans of Deen. In such a situation the qualified Sufis should treat these trainees as common men of the public. Without saying anything about them they should participate in their good deeds and keep away from their harmful conduct and activities and should have no contact with them, so as to leave them in isolation.

In this context another question arises.

Is it lawful for a man engaged in worship and devotion to go into retirement to save himself from some harmful and disgustful activities which he finds around him?

These religious institutions and monasteries are strong forts of belief and faith in which righteous and faithful believers remain safe from their enemies, robbers and thieves of belief and virtues. The environment outside these institutions and monasteries is infected with satanic groups that are roaming about like armed forces to plunder and kill those whom they may find. What will be the fate of one who

goes out of the fort and falls in the hands of the devils? There is, therefore no alternative for weak persons to take refuge in these fortified institutions to save their Deen and faith.

As for persons who are strong enough to withstand the attacks of these enemies and robbers (of Deen), there is no harm if they go out of these fortified institutions and monasteries. Even for such capable and strong persons it is better to remain within the bounds of these so - called forts to forestall sudden enemy attacks and dangers.

To sum up, it is better for those who are following the path of worship, virtues and righteousness to adopt the company of righteous and godly men. As for those who are strong and firm on this path, it is not forbidden for them to live alone and go into retirement.

What is the injunction about mutual contacts and cooperation among men of piety and faith and the followers of the Sharee'ah and the Tareeqah? The answer of this question is that it is a very superior form of worship to visit, and have contacts with brothers who are on the path of Deen and are engaged in reformative activities: This promotes the qualities of virtue and the amelioration of the heart as well as many other benefits. There are, however, two conditions for these mutual contacts and relationships.

1. These contacts should not cross the reasonable limits. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) once said to Hazrat Abu Hurairah (RAA) زرغبا تزدد حبا (call on me on alternate days in order to increase love).

2. In meeting Muslim brothers this truth must be kept in view. There should be no vestiges of ostentation, show and loose talks. These should be avoided to protect both parties from the woe of sins.

Hazrat Fuzail bin 'Iyaz (RA) and Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) were once talking to each other, when they both suddenly began to weep. Hazrat Sufyan (RA) spoke: O Abu Ali (i.e. Hazrat Fuzal RA)! I hope that I have never had a better sitting than this in the past. Hazrat Fuzail (RA) replied saying : I fear that I have never had a more frightening and dangerous sitting than this in the past. Hazrat Sufyan (RA) inquired: How? Hazrat Fuzail (RA) replied: We both talked to each other on interesting and nice topics and each of us was involved in show and ostentation. Hazrat Sufyan (RA) began to weep to hear this reply.

It is, therefore, very necessary that in meeting men of the same faith and belief, precaution and moderation should be observed. Meetings with this precaution will have no adverse effects on the life of retirement and isolation. The parties will suffer no loss but will gain something from each other.

If you ask me about the method and practice of taking to a retired life, I will say that this will become easy in three ways.

1. You should devote all your time to worship, because this is a very difficult task. Mixing with the people unnecessarily causes loss of Deen. It is a vain action to seek contacts with the people without any justification and necessity.

   An Arabic poet has said so nicely:

   ان الفراغ الى سلامك قادنى
   ولربما عمل الفضول فارغ

   Freedom from any work has brought me here
   to bid you salute. What an unemployed person
   does is mostly useless.

You should try to devote yourself to worship nicely, so as to receive enjoyment from your supplications and recitations of the Holy Qur'an. If you succeed in this your heart shall automatically become indifferent to the people and their acquaintance and contacts, and you shall become disgusted with them.

When Hazrat Moosa (Moses) A.S returned from mount Sinai after having conversation with Exalted Allah, he used to run away from the people and stop his ears with his fingers so that he (AS) could not hear the people. At that time he disliked to hear the voices of the people which sounded harsh to his ears like the braying of asses. It is worth remembering what my Shaikh (RA) said:

إرض با لله صاحبا و ذر الناس جانبا

> Make Allah your friend and leave aside the people.

2. The other condition for going into a life of retirement is that you should have no hopes and expectations from the people. This will enable you to become independent of and indifferent to the public. It is human nature to forget and ignore those with whom you have nothing to do.

3. The third condition is that you should consider the negative aspects of contacts with the people and think that when you take the foregoing measures, your heart will automatically arrive at Allah's door, leaving behind the door of the people. You will then become attracted towards Allah's worship. This will create in your heart Allah's love and confer on you the wealth of admission to Allah's court. Indeed these blessings come from none but Almighty Allah.

SATAN, THE THIRD OBSTACLE

(After having crossed the above two obstacles, the world and contacts with the public, you face the third obstacle which is Satan). It is imperative for you to fight against and subjugate this Satan. There are two reasons for it.

1. You have such an enemy in Satan with whom there is no possibility of making a truce nor can you expect any good from him. He is always in search of an opportunity to destroy your Hereafter. You must never be neglectful of such an enemy there are two verses of the Holy Qur'an which must be remembered always.

أَلَمْ أَعْهَدْ إِلَيْكُمْ يَا بَنِي آدَمَ أَنْ لَا تَعْبُدُوا الشَّيْطَانَ إِنَّهُ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ مُّبِينٌ.

(سورة يس: ٦٠)

O children of Adam (AS) did I not tell you that you should never worship Satan because he is your open enemy. (36:60)

إِنَّ الشَّيْطَانَ لَكُمْ عَدُوٌّ فَاتَّخِذُوهُ عَدُوًّا. (سورة فاطر : ٦)

Indeed, Satan is an enemy for you; so treat him as you enemy. (35:6)

How sternly do these verses warn you against Satan as your enemy.

2. Satan is a born enemy of mankind who is ever ready to fight with you and is, in fact attacking you night and day. You are in dark about all this and about your final fate. By your words and acts you are inviting the people to their creator Allah. This goes against Satan's aims and objects. If you are ready to enrage and resist Satan, he too will be ready to oppose and challenge you. He will do his best to spoil your good deeds and push you down

into the abyss of ruin and destruction, because you consider that you are quite safe from him and therefore you have no fear of him.

Satan does not refrain from opposing even such people as never enrage him, nor do they oppose him. Instead, they are busy with satisfying his wishes and befriending him as do the Polytheists of Makkah the misguided lot, the innovators and the worldly wise people.

As against this, think where you are standing when you are challenging Satan and raging a war against him. Satan shall try his best to defeat and overpower you, particularly when he has on his side many helpers to assist him against you, of these the most dangerous are your own self and your desires. Satan is equipped with many other weapons against you of which you are not aware.

Hazrat Yahya bin Ma'az Razi (RA) has truly said:

الشيطان فارغ وانت مشغول. الشيطان يراك وانت لا تراه. انت تنساه وهو لا ينساك

ومن نفسك للشيطان عليك اعوان فاذا لا بدمن محاربته وقهره والا فلا تأمن الفساد والهلاك

Satan is sitting at leisure, (waiting to destroy you), while you are occupied with worldly affairs. Satan is seeing and watching you carefully, while you do not see him. You have forgotten him but he has not forgotten you; he is after you. Satan has his helper in your self. It is therefore imperative that you should fight him and defeat him. You cannot be secure from corruption and ruin, unless you do this.

You may ask: How to defeat Satan and get rid of him? The learned Shaikhs have suggested two ways for this:

1. There is no way to remain safe from Satan and to drive him away except by seeking refuge with Exalted Allah from Satan. Satan is like a dog whom Exalted Allah has let loose at you. If you remain resisting him and driving him away from you, he will be kept at a distance, but in this way you will waste your precious time. On the other hand, if you do not resist him, he will bite you. If is therefore, better to pray to the dog's owner, Allah, to keep the animal away from you.

. Some Ulama have suggested that Satan may be turned away by means of Mujahidah (spiritual exercises and discipline)

In my opinion the best course to get rid of Satan is to take resort to both the ways mentioned above. That is seek refuge with Allah from Satan's evils and mischiefs, because Allah alone has the power to protect you from Satan's conspiracies and seductions.

If despite all this Satan is not defeated and remains victorious on you, you should believe that this is a trial for you by which Exalted Allah desires to test your Mujahidah, patience and stead. Fastness in Deen. Sometimes Allah imposes on us the infidels in order to grant us the honour of martyrdom, patience and purification of our hearts. Thus Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an.

وَلِيَعْلَمَ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَيَتَّخِذَ مِنْكُمْ شُهَدَآءَ. (سوره آلعمران : ١٤٠)

So that Allah may know those who believe and may choose witnesses from among you. (3:140)

أَمْ حَسِبْتُمْ أَنْ تَدْخُلُوا الْجَنَّةَ وَلَمَّا يَعْلَمِ اللهُ الَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا مِنْكُمْ وَيَعْلَمَ الصَّابِرِيْنَ . (سورة آل عمران : ١٤٢)

Do you think that you would enter Paradise, while yet Allah does not know those of you who really strive, nor does He know those (of you) who are steadfast? (3:142)

In this way Exalted Allah has commanded us to fight against Satan and to make preparations for this fight. Our reverend Shaikhs have advised us three ways to defeat Satan:

1. If you are able to understand Satan's frauds and tricks he cannot overpower you, just as a thief runs away when he comes to know that the people in the house are awake.

2. Never respond to Satan's call, nor show any interest in him nor follow in his footsteps. Satan is like a barking dog. If you turn attention to it, if will bark and jump at you to bite you; but if you ignore it, it will remain calm and quiet.

3. Always keep yourself busy with rehearsing Allah's names with your tongue as well as with your heart. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

ان ذكر الله تعالى فى جنب الشيطان كالآ كلة فى جنب ابن آدم

The remembrance of Allah's name is to Satan like skin eruption on man's body.

There are two ways to know the frauds and tricks of Satan:

1. Satan attacks his victims by aiming at them with his whisperings like arrows. It is possible to know these whisperings by feeling them and their various categories.

2. The second weapon of Satan is his disciples and pupils who are Satan's snares. A knowledge of them can be obtained from Satans frauds and tricks.

The respected Ulama have compiled voluminous books on Satans whisperings and ideas. I also have written a book on this subject under the title "Talbis Iblis". The book under study is too small to accommodate all the details of this topic. However, I shall give here a brief account of these whisperings. This will be sufficient, God willing, if the directions are carefully followed. These include a few rules:

1. Exalted Allah has appointed an Angel to accompany every man who invites the man under his charge to good and virtue. The Angel is called "Mulhim" and his invitation is called "Ilham". Against this has been appointed a devil who invites man to vices and sins. This devil is called "waswas".

The Mulhim invites man only to good deeds, but the waswas invites him only to vices and sins. This is what the Ulama in general say. My Shaikh (RA) has said that the devil too sometimes invites his victim to good deeds with the intention of concealing in that good deed some vice also. Thus, for stepping man from some big virtue he invites him to a small virtue, or invites him to a virtue which involves him in sins like pride, show, etc.

In addition, Exalted Allah has appointed on man two heralds who make a call to man and man hears and knows their calls.

It occurs in the narratives that when a child is born Allah Almighty appoints on the child an Angel along with a devil. The devil whispers into the left year of the child and the

Angel whispers into his right ear. Thus each remains busy with his whisperings.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said that devils and Angels both visit men. The whisperings come down in the guise of virtues. The whisperings concealed in the guise of virtues aim at deceiving and tempting men.

The ideas which come from the "temptations of the self" are aimed at instigating man to vices and sins-acts which contain no good. They are due to the straying of the self.

I have heard from some saints that the "temptations of the self" invite man sometime to good deeds but they also conceal vices like the whisperings of Satan.

After these details it is necessary to know three items and they are the desired objectives.

1. It is very important to know the difference between a good idea and a bad idea.

2. It is further necessary to know whether the bad idea is due to the "temptation of the self" or to the whisperings of Satan. If is necessary to know these things in the very beginning because there are different methods and remedies to remove each.

3. As regard, good ideas, it is necessary to know in the very beginning whether the ideas have been inspired by divine sources a by Satanic sources, so that the idea inspired by divine sources may be acted upon and those inspired by Satanic sources may be condemned. The same principle applies to the good ideas inspired by the "temptation of the self".

In order to differentiate between the good ideas and the bad ideas, the Ulama have suggested that the ideas arising in the heart should be weighed on three scales. The first scale is that of the Sharee'ah. If the idea appears to be right according to the Sharee'ah it is good. If it is contrary to the Sharee'ah, it is bad.

In case one is able to find out the difference between the two on the scale of the Sharee'ah the ideas should be weighed on the scale of the principles devised by the renowned Ulama of the past and present times. If he ideas are not found sound and safe on this scale, they should be rejected as bad and totally condemned.

If the difference is not discernible even on this scale it should be weighed on the scale of the "self and the desires of he self".

If the self feels neither a natural aversion to the idea, nor an aversion due to a fear of Allah, the idea is a good one. If the self has a natural liking for it but does not entertain any hope thereon from Allah then the idea is a bad one, because the self has always a natural liking for vices.

If you weight the ideas on these scales, you will be able to realize the difference between good ideas and bad ideas.

وا لله ولى التوفيق

As regards the other issue the Ulama have advised as follows:

If you want to know whether the idea that has occurred to your heart is satanic or divine or due to desires and lusts of the self, then these should also be tested on three scales. If that idea settles in the heart firmly, it may be understood that it is

from Allah. If it does not settle firmly in the heart but suffers from doubt and suspicion, then it is Satanic.

Some saintly scholars used to say that sensual desire may be either like a tiger which can be driven away only with the use of force, or may be like a freedom fighter in the path of Allah that does not move from its stand till it attains martyrdom: As for Satan, it is like that tiger which returns from another side, if it is turned away from one side.

The second scale is that if the idea has arisen after some sin, it is from Allah so that an aversion against that sin will be born in the heart. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

كَلَّا بَلْ سكتة رَانَ عَلَىٰ قُلُوبِهِم مَّا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ. (سورة المطففين: ١٤)

"No but that which they have earned has settled as rust upon their hearts."

My Shaikh (RA) has said that the hearts become hard on account of sins: In the beginning whisperings and misgivings take rise in the heart and later on they give way, to hard-heartedness, and then the heart becomes rusted.

If the bad idea does not arise after a sin, but arises spontaneously then beware it is from Satan, because he is always trying to misguide and seduce mankind.

The third scale is that if the impact of that bad idea is not lightened by the remembrance of Allah, it is due to the self. If that bad idea becomes lighter or disappears by Allah's remembrance, it is due to Satan's whisperings, because Satan cannot tolerate a man's remembering the names of Allah. The learned scholars have written in the commentary of the verse مِن شَرِّ الْوَسْوَاسِ الْخَنَّاسِ that Satan remains sticking to man's heart,

but when man engages himself in Allah's remembrance the devil disturbs his heart by his whispering

If you want to know whether a good idea is from Allah or from the Mulhim (an Angel), then there are three ways for knowing this:

1. If the idea is quite firm, take it to be from Allah. If it is fluctuating and doubtful then think that it is from the Mulhim. The Mulhim is an angle who is a well-wisher of mankind and an advisor of goodness and virtues.

2. If the idea is the outcome of some worship or spiritual exercises and disciplines, it is due to Exalted Allah. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا . (سورة العنكبوت : ٦٩)

As for those who strive in Us We surely guide them to our path. (29:69)

وَالَّذِيْنَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَّ اٰتٰهُمْ تَقْوٰ هُمْ (سورة محمد:١٧)

As for those who are rightly guided, He adds to their guidance and gives them their Taqwa (righteousness) (47:17)

If that idea originates with no apparent cause then in most cases it comes from the Angel.

3. Thirdly, if the idea concerns some principles of Deen, viz., beliefs and inward acts, it is generally from the Angel, because an Angel has no knowledge about the inner state of men.

THE FIRST METHOD OF KNOWING SATAN'S DECEPTION

If Satan infuses into the heart an idea to do good, it is generally to instigate man to some vice.

Pointing out its signs, my Shaikh has said that it is a Satanic idea which must be rejected and avoided if action on it creates in the self pleaseure and satisfaction and no fear is felt in the heart in doing that; if it leads to haste and hurry and does not lead to patience and perseverance and it creates carelessness in respect of the Hereafter, and does not create any spiritual insight.

If the state of the self is otherwise then what has been mentioned above, viz., there is fear in heart, there is neither haste nor pleasure and there is a sense to think of the final outcome of all this, then it should be understood that the idea is due to Exalted Allah.

I mean here by pleasure that a man does something unwillingly and the idea of reaping reward and recompense does not exhort him to good deeds. Further, peace, tranquillity and a gentle course are better on all occasions, excepting a few. The Holy Prophet has said in a Hadith:

العجلة من الشيطان الا من خمس مواضع – تزويج البكر اذا ادركت وقضاء الدين اذا وجب وتجهيز الميت اذا مات وقرى الضيف اذا نزل وتوبة الذنب اذا اذنب .

It is a devil's work to make haste except in five matters: (1) to marry a girl as soon as she comes of age; (2) to repay a debt as soon as it falls due for repayment, (3) to arrange the funeral of a dead body as early as possible. (4) to entertain a guest as soon as possible on his arrival and (5) to repent for a sin as soon as it is committed.

Fear means that the servant of Allah should be feeling an apprehension in his heart whether he can do all these things satisfactorily or not.

To think about the final fate is that he should feel sure that the work is quite good. It may also be a possible meaning that the servant should have hope to receive reward and recompense in the Hereafter. These are three basic and very important points which a man must know. The ideas and the notions arising in the heart should be grasped very well in order to understand their details, categories and the differences and distinctions among them, because these are very fine and rare points of knowledge and research.

THE SECOND METHOD OF KNOWING SATAN'S DECEPTION

It may be borne in mind that there are seven methods to know the cheatings and deceptions of Satan with which he snares mankind.

Firstly Satan stops man from worship altogether. If Allah's mercy overtakes that man and he does not listen to Satan's reduction and insists on his worship for the sake of the Hereafter, Satan beguiles him to postpone his worship for sometime. This is his second attack on the man. If the man saves himself from this attack by Allah's mercy and by his own arguments in favour of his insistence on worship Satan launches against him third attack. He instigates the man to expedite and complete such and such jobs in order to gain full freedom for sincere worship.

If Exalted Allah saves His servant from this attack also and he does not succumb to Satan's deception, the latter makes his fourth attack on the man by involving him in show business and ostentation by suggesting that the worship should

be offered very nicely and attentively, so that the people may take him to be a devout worshipper.

If the man somehow saves himself, by the mercy of Allah from this attack also Satan launches on him the fifth attack by involving him in Pride and arrogance that he is a great worshipper and a very righteous being.

With the help of Allah the man tries to save himself by arguing that he is a very sinful man and his worship and devotion are due only to Allah's mercy, despite his sins. In this way he gets out of Satan's clutches.

Now Satan makes on the man the sixth attack and this is a very dangerous attack from which only very wise and cautious men can remain safe. Satan very cunningly suggests to the man that however secretly he may worship Allah will make his worship and devotion known to the public and he will thus become renowned automatically. In this way Satan tries to involve the man in show and ostentation.

If by Allah's help and mercy the man is able to protect himself from this attack also by arguing that, being a servant of Allah he has to submit himself to Allah's will who has the power to disclose or conceal his deeds and his worship. He therefore does not care at all for a Satan's misleading whispering.

Being frustrated in his efforts so far now Satan directs his seventh attack towards the man. Satan suggests that those good or bad deeds have no effects on man's fate, because everything has been finally settled and decreed in the very beginning of creation. So a man's being good or bad has no effect at all. If, with the help of Allah, the man saves himself from this attack also by saying that being a servant of Allah he has to be obedient and submissive irrespective of what has

been decreed for him. If he has been ordained as an unfortunate person he is more in need of good deeds. He must continue his righteous deeds, because it is much better to appear before Allah as a devout servant than as a disobedient servant.

Again these are all only possibilities and probabilities. Allah has promised to reward those who will go to Him with Eeman (Faith) and good deeds. Allah does not break His promise. Allah will, by His infinite mercy admit into Paradise all who are obedient, God-fearing devout and righteous. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ صَدَقَنَا وَعْدَهٗ . (سورة الزمر : ٧٤)

> Praise be to Allah who has fulfilled His promise to us... (39:74)

May Exalted Allah have mercy on all of us. You should be careful to remain safe from the attacks and cheatings of this accursed Satan. This is indeed a very serious and risky situation. You must always seek Allah's help and refuge. He alone is All-Powerful. All help comes from Him only. وهو ولى التوفيق

THE SELF - THE FOURTH OBSTACLE

It is more imperative for man to save himself from the deception and tricks of the insinuating self, as it forms a very formidable obstacle and a very mean enemy. Terrible are the misfortune and distress it causes and equally terrible is the remedy of the disease caused by this obstacle of man's self. There are two reasons for the injuries and harms caused by this treacherous self.

1. This self is like a thief and robber residing in your own house. It is, therefore, very hard and difficult to protect yourself from such enemies as are hidden in your own premises. Some poet has said :

نفسي الى ماضر ني داعي‌تكثر استقامي واو جاعي
كيف احيالي من عدوى اذا كان عدوى بين اضلاعي

"My self invites me to harmful deeds and increases my diseases and my pains. How can I protect myself from my enemy who is sitting hidden between the ribs?

2. The second reason is that this self is a beloved enemy and when anyone loves someone the lover does not see the defects of the beloved on account of his love. A poet has very nicely expressed this idea:

لست ترى عيا لذى الودو الاخاء ولا بعض مافيه اذا كنت راضيا
وعين الرضا عن كل عيب كليلة لكن عين السخط تبدى المساويا

"When you love anyone and make him your brother and both are pleased with each other the one does not see the defect of the other. The eye of love is blind to every defect and it is the eye of the enemy that can see the defects and vices of any person.

When a man appreciates the vices of his self, then he remains in dark about its defects despite the harm caused by it. He is sure to perish if Allah's mercy does not come to his rescue. It is sufficient for your guidance and warning to reflect on one point the point that whatever damages, distresses and misfortunes have taken place in the world since the origin of the universe and will take place till the Day of Judgement are due to the vices of the self or to its contribution to other factors

of damage and deviation. Satan was the first to display Allah by refusing to prostrate himself before Hazrat Adam (AS) this was on account of pride and jealousy. As a result, his worship for eighty years was ruined and he was condemned to eternal straying and error. This happened at a time when the hindrances like the world, the creatures, etc. did not exist, nor was there anyone else to misguide. This disobedience was only due to self.

The fault committed by Hazrat Adam (AS) was also due to desire of the self.

Satan tempted them on oath to eat the forbidden grain of wheat for getting eternal Paradise. The fault was later on forgiven but its was also due to a contribution of the self. On account of this the couple were deprived of nearness to Allah, were driven out of Paradise and were sent down to the world which is an abode of disgrace and meanness. This led their sons, men, to suffer from countless tortures and disgrace till the day of Judgement.

Subsequently Qabeel killed Habeel. (The two sons of Hazrat Adam AS) because of jealousy. The two Angels Harut and Marut also fell victims to calamities on account of sensual desires of the self. In short, all the sins committed or to be committed till the Day of Judgement are due to an involvement therein of the self. If the self had not been involved the creatures of the world would have been safe and sound. It is therefore necessary for all wise and conscientious persons to protect themselves from the mischief of the self.

It may be asked how to remain safe from this open enemy?

It is related that a villager prayed for his friend, saying, : "May Allah disgrace all your enemies, except the self. This

self cannot be destroyed altogether, because it serves men of worship and devotion as a conveyance. It is therefore necessary to take a middle course by training it for good deeds and weakening it for protection from its evils and vices. The self cannot be kept under strict confinement and control.

All this shows that it is a very difficult task to control the self. Its remedy requires great depth of thought and insight. The practice of righteousness are abstinence are needed to keep this self under control for reaping the benefit of good deeds and for security form sin

A question may be asked how to control this insinuating self (نفس اماره)? It is obstinate and rebellious to be subdued only with the exercise of تقوی (Righteousness)?

This is a very relevant question. The self is indeed very obstinate and disobedient. The remedy to control it lies in subjecting it to disgrace and humiliation.

The respected Ulama have advised that three actions are necessary to suppress the self and its excesses.

1. Firstly, it should be stopped from the satisfaction of lusts and luxuries.

2. It should be burdened with worship and spiritual exercises. Over burdening it has the effect of crushing its pride and mischief as happens to an over burdened ass.

3. One must always be seeking Allah's help to be safe from the excesses of this self.

Hazrat Yusuf (AS) has said:

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ إِلَّا مَا رَحِمَ رَبِّيْ (سورة يوسف : ٥٣)

Surely the human self enjoins on evil, except that whereon my Lord has mercy. (12:53)

If action is taken on the three suggestions mentioned above, this self will - God willing become obedient, but no time should be lost in bridling this self.

THE REALITY OF TAQWA (RIGHTEOUSNESS)?

At the very outset you must know that TAQWA (تقوى) is a very rare wealth. You shall receive very valuable benefits, if you succeed in earning this wealth of Taqwa, which includes knowledge, spiritual treasures, brilliant success and the reward of Paradise. Allah has combined in Taqwa all the advantages and virtues of the world, Deen and the Hereafter.

If you reflect on the verses of the Holy Qur'an you shall see that Exalted Allah has Promised at many places goodness, blessings, reward and recompense and has declared Taqwa to be a means of good luck and prosperity.

IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF TAQWA (RIGHTEOUSNESS)

I am citing below a few verses of the Holy Qur'an dealing with the importance and benefits of Taqwa :

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَإِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُوْرِ. (سورة العمران : ١٨٦)

But if you take to righteousness (Taqwa), then that is of the acts of resolution. (3:186)

A God-fearing man remains safe and secure from the evils and mischiefs of the enemies.

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا لَا يَضُرُّكُمْ كَيْدُهُمْ شَيْئًا. (سورة العمران: ١٢٠)

> And if you persevere and are God-fearing, their conspiracy will do you no harm at all.

A righteous man (متقی) has at his back Allah's help and support.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ اتَّقَوْا وَّالَّذِيْنَ هُمْ مُّحْسِنُوْنَ (سورة النحل : ١٢٨)

> Surely Allah is with those who are God-fearing and who do good. (16:128)

The God-fearing will be safe from the calamities and the hardships of the Hereafter and they have been promised pure and lawful sustenance in this world.

وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ مَخْرَجًا وَّيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ. (سورة الطلاق:٢-٣)

> And whosoever is God-fearing, Allah will appoint a way-out for him and will provide for him sustenance from (a quarter) whence he has no expectation. (65 : 2-3)

Exalted Allah has promised to the God-fearing and the righteous to reform their condition, and forgive their sins.

يٰۤاَيُّهَا الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوا اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَقُوْلُوْا قَوْلًا سَدِيْدًا ○ يُّصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ وَيَغْفِرْ لَكُمْ ذُنُوْبَكُمْ (سورة الاحزاب: ٨٠-٨١)

> O you who have believed fear Allah and speak words straight to the point. He will set right your affairs and forgive your sins. (33 : 70-71)

As pointed out earlier, Allah forgives the sins by virtue of piety and Taqwa.

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ (سورة البقرة : ١٩٥)

Allah loves the God-fearing. (2:195)

The deeds of the God-fearing are accepted by Exalted Allah.

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ (سورة المائدة : ٢٧)

Surely, Allah accepts the deeds of the God-fearing. (5:27)

Righteousness (تقوى) is the only criterion in the sight of Allah for honour and superiority.

إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللّٰهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ (سورة الحجرات : ٢٣)

Surely, the noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the best in Taqwa (righteousness) - (49:13)

There are glad tidings in the Holy Qur'an of prosperity in the world and salvation in the Hereafter for those who are God-fearing :

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَكَانُوا يَتَّقُونَ لَهُمُ الْبُشْرٰى فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِي الْآخِرَةِ. (سورة يونس :٦٣،٦٤)

There are glad tidings in this world and the Hereafter for those who have believed and are God-fearing. (10:63, 64)

The God-fearing have been promised protection from the Fire of Hell.

ثُمَّ نُنَجِّي الَّذِينَ اتَّقَوْا (سورة مريم : ٧٢)

Then we shall afford salvation to those who are God-fearing- (19:72)

وَسَيُجَنَّبُهَا الْاَتْقَى . (سورة الليل : ۱۷)

The God-fearing shall be far removed from it (Hell) (92:17)

There are glad tidings for those who are pious and God-fearing.

اُعِدَّتْ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ . (آل عمران : ۱۳۳)

... (for Paradise) which has been prepared for the God-fearing. (3:133)

In short all the good things and prosperity of the world and the Hereafter have been put together. So O Brothers! Adopt Taqwa (Righteousness).

The three of the benefits mentioned below belong specifically to worship.

1. Allah has promised a righteous man to provide and help and cooperate with him in his worship :

   اِنَّ اللّٰهَ مَعَ الْمُتَّقِيْنَ . (آل عمران : ٧٦)

   Surely Allah is with the righteous (متقين) (3 : 76)

2. The reform of deeds and betterment of worship also are attained through Taqwa

   يُصْلِحْ لَكُمْ اَعْمَالَكُمْ . (سورة الاحزاب : ۷۱)

   Allah shall reform your deeds (by virtue of Taqwa) (33:71)

3. It is only the righteous to whom a Promise has been made that their deeds will be accepted. (On this depends the success of all worship and spiritual disciplines).

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ . (سورة المائدة : ٢٧)

Exalted Allah accepts the deeds only of the righteous. (5:27)

You should note that the value of worship depends on these three principles. Firstly, ability for worship is necessary; secondly, the reform and betterment of its weaknesses and defects; and thirdly, the acceptance of this worship in the Hereafter in the Divine Court. That is why the men of worship and devotion pray to Allah with submissiveness and sincerity for the grant of these three benefits.

ربنا وفقنا لطاعتك وأتمم تقصيرنا وتقبل منا

O our Lord, assist us on your worship and obedience and forgive on shortcomings and accept our worship and devotion.

As for those who are righteous men, Exalted Allah has promised to them these virtues without any request or demand from them. This is by way of holding them in honour and grace.

So, if you want to attain success in this world and in the Hereafter and earn the prosperity of the two worlds, you must take to Taqwa (Righteousness). How nicely has a poet sung the praise of Taqwa in his poetry!

من اتقى الله فذلك الذى سبق اليه المتبحر الرابح
لايتبع المرء الى قبره غير اتقى والعمل الصالح

These couplets mean:

> That man is doing a Profitable business who has taken of the life of Taqwa, because only Taqwa and good deeds accompany a man to his grave.

There is another point to ponder over. People are busy with putting in strenuous efforts in the path of Deen, devoting themselves to worship and are displaying deep submission to Allah. If Allah does not accept these acts of devotion, obedience and faithfulness, the time and efforts so spent will certainly go waste. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ . (سورة المائدة : ٢٧)

> Surely Allah accepts only the deeds of the God-fearing. (5:27)

It appears from this that the acceptance of all deeds depends on Taqwa.

Hazrat Ayeshah (RAA) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) did not cast a glance of appreciation and approval on anyone, except the righteous and the devout.

Hazrat Qatadah (RAA) has narrated that it occurs in the Tora: O Man, practice Taqwa then sleep wherever you desire.

It is related about Hazrat 'Ammar bin Qais (RAA) that at the time of his death he began to weep, although throughout his life he used to offer daily one thousand Rak'ats of optional prayers. When going to bed at nights he addressed his self saying : O self, you are the target of all vices. By Allah, I do not like you in the least. Anyway, when he began to weep at the time of his death someone asked him about the cause of his

weeping, he said : I am weeping on account of this divine word :

إِنَّمَا يَتَقَبَّلُ اللّٰهُ مِنَ الْمُتَّقِينَ . (سورة المائدة : ٢٧)

Surely Allah accepts only the deeds of the God-fearing. (5:27)

Apart from all this, there is an important point to note that all the religious scholars and the past saints, while tendering advice to anyone referred to this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَقَدْ وَصَّيْنَا الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْكِتَابَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَإِيَّاكُمْ أَنِ اتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ. (سورة النساء : ١٣١)

And we charged those who received the scriptures before you and (we charge) you to fear Allah. (4:131)

Exalted Allah is the greatest well-wisher of His servant and Kindest to them. As such, who knows better than Allah what is good for the servants? If there had been anything better for the people than this Taqwa, Exalted Allah must have charged His servants with that. When Exalted Allah has laid stress only on Taqwa and has commanded all the people, past and present to adopt it, it becomes proved to confirmed that Taqwa and Taqwa alone is the essence and object of all worship, devotion and Mujahidat (spiritual strivings).

Now all this discussion confirms and clarifies that in the sight of Exalted Allah Taqwa is the essence of all the divine injunctions, exhortations and recommendations. This virtue of Taqwa conforms to the Divine Wisdom and this alone is a guarantee for the acceptance of all the deeds and worship and for success in the world and the Hereafter. This

point is the basis of all principles. Action on this should be sole concern and preference of men.

وا لله ولی التوفیق والهدایة

How To Know And Recognize Taqwa ?

Taqwa being such an important and precious virtue, a question may be asked what is the reality of Taqwa and how to know it.

Taqwa is really a very glorious and dignified virtue and the endeavour to attain this valuable virtue will also be equally concentrated heart-felt and deeply sincere. It is a well-known axiom that awards are granted in proportion to the efforts put in the task. It is also necessary that man desirous of this virtue should be magnanimous and full of ambition. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ. (سورة العنكبوت: ٦٩)

As for those who strive in our path we surely guide them to our path. Allah is indeed with the good. (29:69)

So, now take heed of my advice and be prepared to follow the path of Taqwa after having understood its essence and reality.

The Meaning Of Taqwa

O my dear Brothers try to understand what the great Shaikhs have stated about the meaning of Taqwa. While explaining the meaning of Taqwa, some of them have said :

تنزیه القلب عن ذنب لم یسبق عنك مثله

To protect the heart from a sin which you did not commit earlier.

There should be a firm determination in your heart to give up sins and an aversion to disobedience to Allah. This is how my Shaikh has defined Taqwa. This Arabic word has been derived from the root word وقاية which literally means to protect and safeguard. When a servant takes a firm resolve to refrain from sins and disobedience he is called متقى (Muttaqi), and the resolve he takes is called تقوى (Taqwa).

The word Taqwa has been used in the Holy Qur'an in three shades of meaning.

1. Fear and awe:

وَاتَّقُوا يَوْمًا تُرْجَعُوْنَ فِيْهِ اِلَى اللهِ (سورة البقرة: ٢٨١)

Fear the day when you will be returned to Allah. (2:281)

2. The word Taqwa has also been used for obedience.

وَاِيَّاىَ فَاتَّقُوْنِ . (سورة البقرة : ٤١)

Fear obey only Me. (2:41)

Here the word "Fear" means obedience and worship. Hazrat Ibn Abbas (RAA) has said in his commentary on this verse:

اَطِيْعُوا اللهَ حَقَّ طَاعَتِهٖ

Obey Allah as He should be obeyed.

Hazrat Mujahid (RA) interpreted this verse as under:

هو ان يُطاع فلا يُعصىٰ وان يُذكر فلا يُنسىٰ وان يُشكر فلا يُكفر.

Allah should be obeyed so as not to be disobeyed; should be remembered, so as not to be forgotten and should be thanked so as not to be unthanked.

In other words, you should sincerely strived in obeying, remembering and thanking Allah as He should be obeyed, remembered and thanked.

3. The word Taqwa has also been used to connote an attempt to protect the heart from the vice of sins and this in fact is the true meaning of the word; the other two meanings are only metaphorical meanings. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an!

وَمَنْ يُّطِعِ اللّٰهَ وَرَسُوْلَهٗ وَيَخْشَى اللّٰهَ وَيَتَّقْهِ فَأُولٰئِكَ هُمُ الْفَائِزُوْنَ . (سورة النور : ۵۲)

He who obeys Allah and His Messenger, and fears Allah and is dutiful to Him, such are the victorious. (24:52)

In this verse Exalted Allah has mentioned three items about Taqwa, viz. Obedience, fear of Allah and Taqwa (righteousness) itself. This shows that Taqwa is something quite distinct from and independent of obedience fear and apprehension. This is something which protects the heart from sins. The learned scholars have mentioned three degrees of Taqwa:

1. Taqwa from Polytheism.
2. Taqwa from Bid'at (Innovation) and
3. Taqwa from sins.

These three degrees of Taqwa are based on the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:

لَيْسَ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ جُنَاحٌ فِيْمَا طَعِمُوْٓا اِذَا مَا اتَّقَوْا وَّاٰمَنُوْا وَعَمِلُوا الصّٰلِحٰتِ ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَّاٰمَنُوْا ثُمَّ اتَّقَوْا وَّاَحْسَنُوْا . (سورة المائدة : ٩٣)

No sin can be imputed to those who believe and do good deeds for what they have eaten earlier, when they have adopted Taqwa have believed and have done good deeds, then again they adopted Taqwa and believed, then again they adopted Taqwa and did good deeds. (5:93)

The first Taqwa used in this verse means aversion to polytheism and abstention from it and the word Eeman (belief) means acknowledgment of belief in the oneness of Allah (توحيد).

The second Taqwa used in the verse means abstention from Bid'at (Innovation) and the word Eeman attached to Taqwa means acknowledgment of the tenets professed by Ahl-e-Sunnah wal Jama'at.

The third Taqwa means giving up the minor sins. As for the word Ihsan closely following Taqwa, it means steadfastness, obedience and the attribute of Ihsan (doing good). Thus, in this verse Exalted Allah has mentioned three degrees of Taqwa

1.Tauheed, as opposed to polytheism
2.Sunnah, as opposed to Bid'at
3.Obedience and righteousness, as opposed to sins.

This is what the learned scholars have said, while detailing the various degrees of Taqwa.

To me it appears that Taqwa has also another meaning in the light of a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH):

ان سمی المتقون متقین لترکهم ما لا بأس به حذرا به عما به بأس

> Those who adopt Taqwa are called Muttaqeen because they abandon what is quite lawful in the Sharee'ah. They do this, so that by being absorbed in these lawful things they may not become involved in unlawful and forbidden things and acts.

I think that it is necessary to explain the complete meaning of Taqwa, in order to reconcile the meaning given by the learned scholars and that contained in the above mentioned Hadith.

A comprehensive and complete meaning of Taqwa is to abstain from all such things and acts, as cause harm to Deen (Faith). A man suffering from fever gives up all injurious foods, e.g., food, drinks, fruits, etc. A real abstainer, or Muttaqi, is therefore, that person who abstains from all such things and acts as are contrary to the injunctions of the Sharee'ah. Things that are harmful to Deen are of two kinds. (1) What is forbidden and is a sin; (2) The use of lawful things, beyond the reasonable limits.

The use of desirable permissible and lawful things beyond their due limits gradually involves a man in sins. The use of lawful things too often and in large quantities proves instrumental to the rebellion of the self and its indulgence in desires and lusts and thus the servant of Allah becomes drowned in sins. It is, therefore, necessary for the protection of

one's Deen to abstain not only from unlawful things but also from undue use of lawful things. This is what the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has also pointed out in a Hadith:

تركهم ما لا بأس به حذرا عما به بأس

> The God-fearing people abstain from lawful things so that they may not be involved in the use of unlawful things.

In the light of this detailed exposition a comprehensive and complete definition of Taqwa is: To abstain from all such things as are harmful to Deen. This is the nature and reality of Taqwa. In Tasaw-wuf Taqwa means the practice of safeguarding the heart from every such sin as had not been committed earlier, so that the resolve of abstaining from sins may become a means to protect the heart from sins and vices.

Vices are also of two kinds:- (1) A genuinė vice which the Sharee'ah has forbidden in clear-cut words. (2) A virtual vice which is not unlawful but it has been advised that one should not indulge in it lavishly, in order to close the door of lusts and desires.

In so far as the genuine vice or sin is concerned, it is an obligatory duty (فرض) to abstain from it, as one who commits it will be punished to this sin. As for the virtual vice, it is not unlawful, but one is advised not to indulge in it lavishly and unduly, in order to close the door of lusts and desires. If a man drowns himself without check in the enjoyments of these virtual vices, which are not unlawful but are only permissible, he will be called to account in the Hereafter and will be put to shame. As such this man will be a Muttaqi of an inferior class who abstains from the genuine vices, but indulges in unnecessary activities. This is the status of those who remain steadfast on obedience and submission.

As for one who abstains from genuine vices, as well as virtual vices both, he is a Muttaqi of a superior class, because he abstains from unlawful as well as from lawful, desirable and permissible things. One who attains Taqwa by practicing both these kinds is in reality a true and real Muttaqi. On this depends the completion of Deen. It is the virtue of Taqwa through which the Muttaqi learns the etiquette of attending the Divine Court and invoking Exalted Allah. It is therefore, necessary to understand well the nature and reality of Taqwa and its meaning.

A question now arises how to adopt Taqwa and how to bring the self on the path of Taqwa?

If the self instigates you to commit a sin your should exercise a strict control on this self so as to desist from that sin with a firm determination and unshakable resolve. You should also refrain from the use of avoidable desirable and permissible things of the world. When man has once controlled his self, Taqwa will automatically find its way to all the outward and inward limbs and parts of the body, viz., the eyes, the ears, the tongue, the heart, the stomach and the private parts.

I have dealt with this topic in great detail in my book, Ihyau-Uloomiddin. Here I am going to say something only about the five limbs of the body which should be protected from misuse and sins.

Limbs Of The Body Which Must Be Protected From Sins

These five limbs are: The eyes, the ears, the tongue the heart and the stomach. It is very necessary, in the interest of the protection of your Faith and Belief, to stop these limbs from

committing sins under strict control, the remaining limbs of the body will automatically become docile and submissive.

I am going to discuss these limbs in detail in the following pages, along with a brief discussion of those objects and acts which are unlawful from which these limbs must be protected.

SECTION 1

A DISCUSSION OF THE ACTS WHICH CONCERN THE EYES

It is imperative for you to protect the eyes from sinful glances, because the eyes are the root-cause of all vices and corruption. I am, therefore, going to mention three guiding principles.

These will God-willing make the problem of protecting the glance easier.

THREE PRINCIPLES TO PROTECT THE GLANCES

The first principle has been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا فُرُوْجَهُمْ ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْ
اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَصْنَعُوْنَ ○ (سورة النور: ٣٠)

> Tell the believing men to lower their gazes and protect their private parts. That is purer for them. Surely, Allah is Aware of what they are doing. (24:30)

In this verse Exalted Allah has combined three aspects viz., etiquette, warning and refining : -

To teach etiquette, Allah has said:

قُلْ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ يَغُضُّوْا مِنْ اَبْصَارِهِمْ وَيَحْفَظُوْا --

The imperative mood (صيغه أمر) has been used in this verse which contains a command. This makes it binding on a slave to obey his Master's command according to the etiquette prescribed for him. If he does not carry out the command according to the etiquette he will be regarded as ill-mannered, unfit to enter the assembly of the Master to appear before the Master so, a slave must obey the command of his Master and this is what the rules of etiquette demand.

WARNING

Allah has said ذٰلِكَ اَزْكٰى لَهُمْ (That is purer for them). These words may be interpreted in two ways.

Firstly, the lowering of the gaze may be a cause for the purification of the heart, because Zakat means purification. Secondly, the lowering of the gaze may be a cause for enhancing the good deeds of the believers, because Zakat also means increase in the blessings. In other words, the act of lowering the gaze leads to purification of the heart and increase in good deeds and virtues.

This command is due to the fact that if you cast your glances unrestricted and carelessly instead of lowering them, these glances may fall on useless objects, extending gradually to forbidden sights. If you cast your glances intentionally on unlawful and forbidden objects then this is indeed a grievous sin which may ultimately result in your ruin.

It occurs in certain narratives that if a man casts his glance at any object, he is affected by it in the same way as a tanned skin is quickly affected by any colour.

The object on which you cast your glances may not be forbidden, may be quite lawful and permissible, yet by being allured by it, your heart may become filled with doubts and suspicions. These doubts and suspicions may deprive you of the blessings of doing good deeds.

If you do not cast your eyes at random this way and that way you shall remain safe and secure from all dangers. Hazrat Eesa (Jesus-AS) has expressed the same idea in these words.

اياكم والنظرة فانها تزرع فى القلب الشهوة كفى بها لصاحبها فتنة

Beware of sinful glances. They create in the hearts lusts which lead to trial and corruption.

Hazrat Zunnoon, the Egyptian (RA) has said

نعم حاجبُ الشهوات غض الابصار

Lowering the gazes protects from lusts and unlawful enjoyments.

Anyway, when you exercise control over your glances and save them from falling on useless objects, your heart will remain safe from doubts and suspicions. This will keep you absorbed in good deeds and virtue. Allah has said by way of a warning:

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَصْنَعُوْنَ ○ (سورة العنكبوت : ٤٥)

Allah is Aware of what you are doing. (29:45)

It has been said in another place:

يَعْلَمُ خَائِنَةَ الْأَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى الصُّدُوْرُ . (سورة المؤمن : ١٩)

He (Allah) knows the traitor of the eyes and that which the bosoms conceal. (40:19)

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE OF SAFEGUARDING THE GLANCES

This second principle of safeguarding the glances is contained in a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

ان النظر الى محاسن المرأة سهم مسموم من سهام إبليس فمن تركها
اذاقه الله طعم عبادة تسره. (الحديث)

To cast a glance at the charms of a woman is one of the poisonous arrows of Iblis. Allah grants him the taste of exhilarating worship who refrains from such glances.

Sweetness and good taste in worship are a great blessing for the worshippers. It has been proved by experience that what has been promised in this Hadith is quite true. A worshipper who abstains from casting sinful glances is sure to enjoy this sweetness and taste in his worship.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE OF SAFEGUARDING GLANCES

Men should think deeply about the functions their limbs shall perform on the day of Judgement. It shall be a matter of great regret and sorrow, if these limbs fail to discharge their duties on that Day. If this anxiety about the limbs pinches the heart, it will become easy to watch and control these limbs.

Exalted Allah has created the legs for strolling in the gardens and palaces of Paradise, the hands for holding the overflowing glass of the pure wine of Paradise and for plucking its fruits, the eyes to see the most charming Face of Allah and so on so forth.

These are the most elevated aims in the two worlds. The limbs created for such sublime aims should be protected from worthless movements and nasty ideas. If you follow these principles you may God-willing remain safe, from useless unlawful movements and activities.

وَاللهُ وَلِيُّ التَّوْفِيْقِ وَهُوَ حَسْبِي وَنِعْمَ الْوَكِيْل

SECTION 2

FUNCTIONS OF THE EARS

The ears should also be protected from hearing useless talks and nonsense. There are two reasons for this. (1) The speaker as well as the listener both become partners in the virtues or vices of the subject matter of the conversation. (2) The hearing of bad talks and nonsense creates in the heart doubts and suspicions of all sorts which disturb and spoil worship.

You should note very well that whatever the ears convey to a man's mind and heart is just like food that gets into the stomach which may be good or bad. Good foods provide nutrition to the body, but bad foods harm the body like poison. Exactly in the same way clean and pure words revive and strengthen Eeman (Belief), but nasty and bad words weaken and destroy Eeman. It is much easier to get rid of the injurious effects of bad food but sometimes bad words are so vicious that it is very difficult to purge the heart of their damaging effects for long. They keep the heart entangled in doubts and suspicions. Allah's assistance should be sought against these suspicions and misgivings, as sometimes they expose men to trials and corruption. On the other hand, if a man uses the faculty of hearing cautiously and avoids listening to useless words and nonsense, he can safeguard himself from

many trials and mishaps. There is material for the wise to reflect on this question.

SECTION 3

FUNCTIONS OF THE TONGUE

It is also very important and necessary to safeguard the tongue against its improper use. Most corruptions and vices are from a misuse of the tongue.

Hazrat Sufyan bin Abdullah (RAA) has narrated that once he asked the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as to what was most harmful for him.

Beckoning to his tongue the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: This. Hazrat Yunus bin Abdullah (RAA) has said: I have courage enough to observe fasting during the hottest days of Basra, but I have no courage to stop my tongue from uttering useless and nonsensical words.

FIVE PRINCIPLES TO SAFEGUARD THE TONGUE

The tongue is the most dangerous limb of the body and it must be safeguarded carefully. It requires great strength to keep it under control. I am mentioning here five principles to protect it.

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE

Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (RAA) is reported to have said: When a man gets up in the morning from his sleep the limbs of his body address his tongue, saying :

> Pass the day in truthfulness and righteousness; refrain from nonsense and loose talks. If you go aright we too shall go aright. On the other

> hand if you take the wrong path we too shall follow the same path.

In my opinion what the tongue utters affects rightly or wrongly the other limbs of the human body. Pure and nice words take the speaker nearest to Allah but henious and nasty words cause him dishonour and disgrace.

Hazrat Malik bin Dinar (RAA) has also said something in this context:

> When you become narrow-minded, idle and lethargic and straitened in the matter of your livelihood, you should think that you have uttered some useless and nonsensical words.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE

Time is precious. Recognize its value and spend it in the remembrance of Allah, because what is uttered with the tongue, other than this remembrance, is generally useless and nonsense and thereby you are laying waste your precious capital of life, time.

It is related about Hazrat Hassan bin Sinvan (RAA) that once, while getting down from the first floor, he asked the owner of the building how long ago that floor had been built. However, immediately after putting this question he felt awfully ashamed and addressed his self thus: you proud self! You are wasting your precious time in such useless matters. Thereafter he wept for this action for about a year.

Fortunate indeed are those who value the precious asset that is time and spend it in reforming themselves. On the other hand unfortunate are those who have let loose their tongues unbridled which remain busy in uttering nonsense.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE

Protection of the tongue guarantees protection of righteous deeds. This is because those who leave their tongues unbridled remain uttering nonsense and unworthy words including the grievous sin of backbiting. There is a popular saying:

من كثر لغطه كثر غلطه

The more a man talks the more mistakes he commits As for backbiting, it is a sin which destroys good deeds as lightning destroys cultivation and turns everything into ashes in no time.

Someone told Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) that such and such a person had backbitten the Shaikh. Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) sent through this man to the backbiter a bag of dates as a gift in return for the reward which he had transferred to the account of the good deeds of the Shaikh by backbiting the latter.

Someone said something to Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (RA) about backbiting. He (RA) said: If backbiting had been lawful I would have committed this sin against my mother, because she is in great need of good deeds.

It is related about Hazrat Hatim Asam (RA) that once he (RA) missed his Tahajjud prayer. His wife put him to shame for this. The Shaikh (RA) said: A large group of worshippers kept vigil throughout the night and offered نوافل (optional prayers), but in the morning they committed backbiting against me. The entire deeds of that group during the night will be credited to my Register of Deeds on the Day of Judgement.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE

By safeguarding his tongue against its misuse a man remains safe from all sorts of trials and calamities.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) has said: Never utter such things with your tongue that on hearing them the people may break your teeth.

Another saint has said : In order to be safe from trials and corruption, it is necessary for you not to leave your tongue unbridled.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (RA) has said:

الا احفظ لسانك ان اللسان   سريع المرء في قتله
ان الانسان دليل الفؤاد   بدل الرجال على عقله

These couplets mean :

Beware! Protect your tongue, because it is very prompt in ruining men. This tongue is a guide for man's heart which guides them to wisdom.

Hazrat Ibn Mutee (RA) has said:

لسان المرء ليث في مكين   اذا خلى اليه أغاره
فضه عن الخفا بلجام ضمت   .يكن لك من بليات ستاره

Man's tongue is like arrow lying in an ambush ready to shoot at its target. So put on this tongue the bridle of silence to be safe from all calamities. There are many words which demand that they should not be uttered.

May Exalted Allah save the believers from the vices and evils of the tongue.

THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE

One of the causes of punishment inflicted on man in the Hereafter will be the misuse of the tongue. This should be visualized along with the punishment appointed for the sins of the tongue.

If your conversation is on meaningless and unlawful topics. it will take you - God - forbid to Hell. The punishment of Hell is too severe for man to bear.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

ليلة أسرى بى رأيت فى النار قوما يأكلون الجيف فقلت يا جبرائيل! من هؤلاء؟ قال هؤلاء الذين يأكلون لحوم الناس.

"I saw on the night of معراج (Ascension) a community who were eating carrion. I asked Jibrael (AS) who they were. He said that they were those who use to eat carrion in the world (i.e., they used to backbite others.)

Once the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said to Hazrat Ma'az (RAA):

إقطع لسانك عن حملة القرآن و طلاب العلم ولا تمزق الناس بلسانك فتمزقك كلاب النار.

"Protect your tongue from (backbiting) the bearers of the Qur'an (i.e. the Huffaz) and the seekers of knowledge (students) and do not tear (backbite) the people with your tongue lest the dogs of the Hell-Fire should tear you.

Hazrat Abu Qulabah (RAA) has said:

ان الغيبة خراب القلب من الهُدىٰ

Backbiting deprives the heart of the right guidance.

May Exalted Allah protect us from all these evils.

So far we have talked about using the tongue in uttering what is unlawful and forbidden. As for topics about what is lawful and permissible it is not good to utter about them, except in very unavoidable circumstances. There are four reasons for this.

THE FIRST REASON

The two recording Angels (Kiraman Katibeen) have been appointed to record the talks of everyone. Man should not, therefore, burden these Angels unnecessarily with the work of recording. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

مَا يَلْفِظُ مِنْ قَوْلٍ إِلَّا لَدَيْهِ رَقِيبٌ عَتِيدٌ . (سورة ق:٢٦)

(Man) does not utter a word, but there is an observer ready with him (to record it) (50:18)

THE SECOND REASON

How undesirable it is that our Register of Deeds should be full of nonsense and useless talks and be put up before the Greatest Ruler (Allah) in this condition! It is, therefore, necessary to avoid unnecessary talk. It is written in some books that when a man saw his fellow man talking uselessly, he warned the latter that the entire talk would be put up before Exalted Allah.

THE THIRD REASON

On the Day of Resurrection the deeds of a servant will be read to him when there will be hardships, thirst, nakedness,

hunger, weariness and so many other calamities. The doors to Paradise will be closed and there will be all sorts of distress and no comfort. How painful will it be at such a critical time when the Register of Deeds filled with nonsense and disgustful things will be read out! It is, therefore, necessary to avoid uttering nonsense and bad talks.

The Fourth Reason

The servant addicted to useless and nonsensical talks will be exposed to curse and blame in the Divine Court when no excuse and explanation will be possible there. Such useless utterances should, therefore be always avoided.

Some saints have advised that the tongue should be kept under strict control and protected from uttering useless and objectionable talks. The above four reasons are sufficient for those who desire admonition. For more details one may see my book اسرار معاملات دین (The secrets of Religious Affairs).

Section 4

The Heart

The protection and reform of the heart are very important issues. As the condition of the heart affects all other limbs of the human body, the heart presents more important and serious problems for its purification and reform. Now I mention five principles for the reform of the heart. If these are followed with due care, the heart shall, God-willing become reformed.

The First Principle

Exalted Allah has said,

يَعْلَمُ خَآئِنَةَ الْاَعْيُنِ وَمَا تُخْفِى الصُّدُوْرُ (سورة المومن : ١٩)

He (Allah) knows the traitor of the eyes and that which the bosoms conceal. (40:19)

He has also said:

وَاللّٰهُ يَعْلَمُ مَا فِيْ قُلُوْبِكُمْ (سورة الاحزاب : ٥١)

And Allah knows what is in your hearts. (33:51)

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلِيْمٌ بِذَاتِ الصُّدُوْرِ (سورة آل عمران : ١١٩)

Allah is indeed aware of what is hidden in your breasts. (3:119)

Now see how Exalted Allah has said the same thing in His Book repeatedly (so that the point may become impressed firmly on the hearts). That Allah knows the secrets of the bosoms is enough for men to fear Him. You should feel ashamed before Allah for the vicious ideas you are hiding in your heart, because Allah is All-Knowing.

THE SECOND PRINCIPLE

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

اِنَّ اللّٰهَ تعالٰی لا ینظر الٰی صُوَرکم وابشارکم وانما ینظر الٰی قُلوبکم واعمالکم .

Exalted Allah does not see your faces nor your features, but he sees your hearts and your deeds only.

If a man keeps himself clean and attractive but ignores the cleanliness and purity of his heart, it is a matter of regret. It was necessary for him to keep his heart clean and pure to attract Allah's attention.

It is very sad that his heart has become a target for devilish whisperings, dirty ideas and thoughts and all attention is being paid to the decoration of the outer features of the body in an attempt to conceal from public the vices lurking within the body.

THE THIRD PRINCIPLE

The heart is the head of all the other limbs of the body which obey the heart as the subjects of a Ruler obey, their Ruler. If the leader or the Ruler is on the right path, the subjects will also follow the right path. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

ان في الجسد مضغة اذا صلحت
صلح الجسد كله واذا فسدت
فسدا الجسد كله، الا وهى القلب

> Man's body contains a lump of flesh. If that lump becomes sound, the entire body becomes sound and if that lump gets spoiled, the whole body gets spoiled. Note that it is the heart.

The reform of the entire body depends on the soundness of the heart. The reform of the heart is therefore, very imperative.

THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE

The heart is a store-house of spiritual gems and the most precious of these gems is the "knowledge of Allah" which is a means of attaining the success and prosperity of the two worlds. The heart is that vision whereby man is granted the position of honour and dignity in the Divine Court. Another very high faculty connected with the heart is the "Sincerity of Intention" in worship and devotion. On the "Sincerity of Intention" depends the award of recompense and punishment. The other gems relating to the heart are learning

and wisdom which are the signs of man's dignity and perfection; nice conduct and character. Amicable manners bestow on man greatness and superiority. I have dealt with these matters in greater details in my book, "The secrets of Religious Affairs". When the heart is a store-house of so precious gems, it must be safeguarded from all forces of distress and ruin so that it may be maintained safe and sound from all damages and inimical onslaughts.

THE FIFTH PRINCIPLE

When I reflected deeply on the state of the heart I found that the heart has five outstanding aspects which are not found in any other limb. These are as under:

1. The enemy is always trying to misguide the heart. It is a seat of inspirations as well as satanic whisperings. The Angel and Satan each is trying to attract the heart towards him.

2. The heart is never at rest. Both wisdom and lusts are invading it with their armies at all times.It has thus become a battlefield for both. It is, therefore, necessary to restrict each enemy within its limit by exercising strict control and vigilance.

3. The heart remains constantly surrounded by obstacles and hindrances which are falling on it like showers of arrows or rains. This process is endless and beyond the capacity of man to stop it. The heart is not like the eye to be closed at the time of a danger and opened when the danger is over, it is not located in a far-off place or hidden in the darkness of the night to remain safe from enemy attacks; it is also not like the tongue protected by the teeth and the lips. The heart is a target for whisperings and thoughts and man has no power to ward

off these whisperings. That is why, it requires great strivings and labour to counteract and the insinuating ideas attacking it.

4. The heart is very quickly affected by changes and attractions and is being constantly attacked by all sorts of doubts and whisperings. The heart has been named in the Arabic language قلب, meaning change. It is subject to constant change minute by minute with new ideas and thoughts entering and leaving it. In such a difficult situation, if the heart deviates from the right path, it is a very serious matter. The minimum effect of the heart's deviation and straying is that it inclines to sins and the maximum effect is that a seal is put on the heart.

أَبٰى وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِيْنَ (سوره ص : ٧٥)

(Except Iblis) Who refused, took pride and became one of the disbelievers. (38:75)

In other words, Satan disobeyed Allah's command on account of pride and arrogance.

وَلٰكِنَّهٗ أَخْلَدَ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ. (سورة الاعراف:١٧٦)

.... but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust. (7:176)

He (Satan) became caught in a very heinous crime, because he followed his own lusts.

In another verse Allah has said.

وَنُقَلِّبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَارَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوْا بِهٖ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ وَّنَذَرُهُمْ فِيْ طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُوْنَ ○ (سورة الأنعام)

We confounded their hearts and their eyes, as they did not behave in it at the first. We let them wander blindly in their contumacy (6:111)

That is why people possessing spiritual insight remain very cautious about the state of their hearts and are always anxious to reform it in all humility and submissiveness.

It occurs in the Holy Qur'an:

يَخَافُوْنَ يَوْمًا تَتَقَلَّبُ فِيْهِ الْقُلُوْبُ وَالْأَبْصَارُ. (ســــــــورة النور:١٨)

They fear that day on which the hearts and the eyes. (24:37)

May Exalted Allah let all of us take advice from these verses.

The problem relating to the reform of the heart is very important. At the same time the principle which are adopted for attaining this reform of the heart also contain some hazards and difficulties which may become a means of degenerating the heart. We must therefore, know what are these hazards and difficulties, so that they may be avoided.

There are many ways of reforming the heart and it is not possible to mention them all in this book. The learned Shaikhs have however, mentioned an important point in this behalf, including ninety good qualities for the reform of the heart and the some number of bad trails which degenerate the heart. These learned Shaikhs have also mentioned the factors conducive to the reform of the heart and the procedure to be followed.The factors that are harmful to the process of reform are issues that require detailed study and discussion.

However, if is not difficult to know these details for those who realize the importance of Deen are not drowned in negligence and are busy with due attention with activities conducive to the amelioration of their Hereafter.

I have included some of these details in my book Ihya-u-Uloomiddin in the chapter relating to the heart, but I have given the full details in my book "The secret of the Religious Affairs". This is a book containing a permanent source of benefit but only scholars erudite Ulama can receive benefit from it.

In this book, MINHAJUL ABIDEEN, I have adopted only the styles which are useful for everyone, whether qualified or a beginner, weak or strong. This is a book in which I have not discussed very deep and subtle points.

After giving much thought to the problem of reforming and curing the heart I have come to know four principles for reforming the heart. Similarly I have come to know four factors concerning the degeneration and corruption of the heart. These latter factors mean a trial for the worshippers and the devout, a distress for the self, an obstacle in the way of reform; they drive the heart into the abyss of ruin. As against these the other four principles prove helpful in worship and in the process of reform of the heart.

Four Principles Regarding Corruption Of The Heart

(1) Building hopes for the sake of the world.
(2) Undue haste in worship
(3) Jealousy.
(4) Pride.

There are four principles concerning the reform of the heart:

1. Severing all hopes for the world
2. Exercising endurance and perseverance in dealings and in worship.
3. Doing good to Allah's creation.
4. Inculcating modesty and humbleness in the heart.

These are the eight principles on which depends the reform or the corruption of the heart. It is, therefore, necessary for everyone to do his best to save himself from the ruin of his Hereafter and try to reach the final goal by keeping away from the causes of corruption and by adopting the principles of reform. Now follows a brief but comprehensive exposition of each of these principles:

BUILDING PROLONGED HOPES FOR THE WORLD

Building prolonged hopes in favour of the worldly gains and resourses forms a great obstacle in the path of goodness and righteousness. This a contageous disease, almost incurable, which entangles men in other calamities and diseases. If you fall a victim to prolonged hopes, this will increase four vices.

It will become easier to give up worship and make you insipid in the matter of worship and devotion, with the result that you will become used to putting off worship until it may be abandoned altogether.

Hazrat Daood Tai (RA) has said:

من خاف الوعيد قرب عليه البعيد ومن طال امله ساءَ عمله

Even the far off matters appear to be nearer to him who fears Allah's threat. As for him who entertains prolonged hopes, his deeds become spoiled.

Hazrat Yahya bin Ma'az Razi (RA) has said:

الامل قاطع من كل خير والطمع مانع من كـل حـق والصـبر صـائر الى كل خيرو النفس داعية الى كل شر.

Entertaining prolonged hopes in favour of the world keeps a man away from good deeds; greed stops one from accepting the truth. As for patience, it urges man to all good deeds. The self invites man to all vices.

Prolonged hopes lead one to the habit of postponing Repentance. Man is beguiled by thoughts that it is yet too early to take to repentance. Life is long, the present age is too tender to think of repentance which may be put off for some future time. It is an action which lies within one's power and may be taken as and when one likes. Surrounded by such misleading thoughts man becomes negligent in the matter of reforming himself. He goes on postponing repentance until death overtakes him all of a sudden. Thus, he loses the world as well as the Hereafter.

It is the love of wealth and property that prolongs a man's hopes. The love of the world makes a man oblivious of the hereafter and too much absorbed in the worldly affairs. He tries to justify this love by thinking that his requirements of money may perhaps increase during his old age when he may not be able to earn money an account of infirmity, disease, and old age. Thousands of such misleading insinuations and ideas involve him in greed for the worldly resourses. Such a man pays greater attention to his food and drink, his dress and the changes of the seasons. He thinks that if he has a long lease of life, he must amass much wealth to pass his later days of life with ease and freedom from want. An endless train of thoughts assail his mind on account of which he lays waste the precious.

days of his life. Thus he becomes miserly and exposed to baseless anxieties, fears and worries.

It is narrated from Hazrat Abu Zar Ghifari (RAA):

قتلنی هم یوم لم ادرکهٗ قیل وکیف ذلك یـا ابـاذر؟ قـال ان املی جاوز اجلی .

The worries of the days which are yet to come have killed me. When asked how, he said: My hopes have preceded my death.

The fourth reason for increase in the hopes and expectations is the heart-hardedness and carelessness about the Hereafter which involve men in prolonged hopes. When a man begins to entertain hopes for ease and enjoyments, he forgets death as well as the pit of the grave. Hazrat Ali (RAA) has said:

ان اخوف ما اخاف علیکم اثنتان، طول الامـل واتبـاع الهـوی. الاّ وان طول الأمل ینسی الآخرة واتباع الهوی یصد عن الحق.

The most of all that I fear for you are two things prolonged hopes and the following of lusts and desires. Beware! The prolonged hopes make you forget the Hereafter and the following of lusts and desires stand in the way of accepting the truth.

When a man falls a victim to prolonged hopes, all his thoughts and attention become concentrated on the luxuries and enjoyments of the world. His contacts with the general public increase and he becomes hard-hearted. The heart becomes soft by remembering and thinking about the Hereafter, death and the loveliness of the grave. Gentleness in

the heart is born only by reflecting on the punishment and reward of the Hereafter and its terrible events.

When all these characteristics are lacking how can the heart be softened and purified? Allah has said:

فَطَالَ عَلَيْهِمُ الْأَمَدُ فَقَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ (سورة الحديد : ١٦)

But the term (of life) became for them and so their hearts became hardened. (57:16)

Thus, with the increase of hopes the feeling of obedience and devotion will go on vanishing along with the vanishing of the urge towards repentance. This will result in the increase of sins, greed and hard-heartedness. Man will forget everything about his end. His Hereafter shall be ruined, unless rescued by Allah's mercy. What greater failure and wretchedness than this can there be for a man? This is all due to the prolongation of hopes.

You are therefore advised to shorten your hopes as far as possible, consider death nearer than life and remember the fate of your friends and relatives whom death overtook all of a sudden of which they had no idea at all. Who knows, you may-God forbid meet the same fate? So frighten your arrogant and fraudulent self with the divine punishment and remember this saying of Hazrat Auf bin Abdullah (RAA):

كم من مستقبل يوماً لم يستكمله ومنتظر غداًلم يدركه .

How many men there are who enter upon a day but are not able to complete it (i.e. die before its completion); how many tomorrows there are which they are not able to see.

If you get in reality an idea of the hardships of death, you will become disgusted with the prolongation of hope and treachery.

Did you not hear about the saying of Hazrat Eesa (Jesus A.S.)

الدنيا ثلٰثة ايام امس مضٰى مابيدك شيء وغداً لا تدرى تدركه ام لا ويومٌ انت فيه فاغتنمه :

The worldly life consists only of three days. (1) Yesterday which has passed and gone beyond your reach. (2) Tomorrow you do not know whether you will get it or will not get it. (3) Today is at your disposal and you should make the best of it.

Hazrat Abu Zar Ghifari (RAA) has said:

الدنيا ثلاث ساعاتٍ ساعة مضت وساعةٌ انت فيها وساعة اتدركها ام لا.

The entire life of the world can be compared to three hours an hour which has passed away the second hour which is at your disposal and the third hour of the future which you may get or may not get.

This is the reality of the world that you have only one hour at your disposal. Man, in fact, owns only one breath. He owns neither a complete day nor even a complete hour. Taking the opportunity of this one available breath, spend it in obedience and worship, lest it should also go waste. Make haste in taking to repentance, lest the time should pass away and death may allow you no respite even to the extent of a breath. Do not worry about your next meal. Who knows you

may live or may not live by that time. Do not waste all this precious time in efforts to earn your living. Thus, man loses this precious time in search of his sustenance.

Just remember those words of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) which he (PBUH) said to Hazrat Usamah (RAA) bin Zaid (RAA):

> اما تعجبون من أسامة المشترى بصبر شهر ان أسامة لطويل الامل وا لله ما وضعت قدما فظننت انى ارفعها ولقمة فظننت انى اسبغها حتى يدركنى الموت الذى نفسى بيده ان ما توعدون لآت وما انتم بمعجزين.

> O people! Are you not surprised at the act of Usamah bin Zaid (RAA) that he makes purchases for the whole month. He has, indeed fallen a victim to prolonged hopes. By Allah, whenever I put a step on the ground I feel doubt if I will be able to raise it up or not. Whenever I put into my mouth a morsal I feel doubt whether I will be able to swallow it down or not on account of death that may overtake me. I say by that Allah in whose hands is my life that all promises which have been made to you will be fulfilled and you cannot thwart Allah.

So, when you bear all these directions in your mind, it is hoped that, by Allah's mercy, your hopes and expectations will be reduced, your self will become inclined towards good deeds, it will be easy for you to repent for your sins quickly and this will bring forgiveness of your sins. A feeling of hatred will spring up in your heart against the world and "reckoning" in the Hereafter will become easier for you.

Your heart will become interested in the scenes of the Hereafter, the hard-heartedness will give way to softness of the

heart, which will, in turn, create the fear of Allah. You will be steadfast in worship. By reducing your hopes with Allah's mercy, your chances of success, security and prosperity in the Hereafter will increase.

It occurs in the narratives that someone saw Hazrat Zararah bin Awfa (RAA) in a dream after his death and asked him about the best deed. He (RAA) replied saying:

> "A hope to receive Allah's pleasure and cut off hopes from the world."

You too should try to attain this high position according to your capacity. It is a very good deed to refrain from prolonged hopes as this is an effective means of reforming the self and the heart.

A Description Of Jealousy

Jealousy is a vice which ruins good deeds and instigates men to sins. This is a very deadly disease from which very erudite Ulama and commentators of the Holy Qur'an are seen suffering, what to say of the general public and the ignorants. It has left no stone unturned in ruining persons. It has been said:

> ستة يدخلون النار بستة، العرب بالعصبية وا لامراء بـاجلور والدهاقين بالكبر والتجار بالخيانة وأهل الرساتيق بـالجهل والعلماء بالحسد.

> Six kinds of people will enter fire on account of six reasons: the Arabs, because of racial prejudices; and the rich because of oppression; the landlords and the leaders because of pride; the business men because of dishonesty and the villagers because of ignorance and the Ulama, because of jealousy.

It is, therefore, imperative to save oneself from a calamity which will drive even the Ulama into Hell. Note that the disease of jealousy begets five kinds of vices:

1. It spoils worship. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

الحسد يأكلُ الحسنات كما تأكلُ النار الحطب .

Jealousy eats away good deeds as fire eats away fuel wood.

2. Jealousy gives rise to sins and bad deeds. Hazrat Wuhab bin Manbah (RA) has indicated three signs of a jealous person: (1) He flatters when he comes face to face anyone (2) Backbites at the back and (3) feels happy to see others in trouble.

The most evident proof of the vice of jealousy is that Exalted Allah has commanded us in the Holy Qur'an to seek refuge from the mischief of the jealous persons.

وَمِنْ شَرِّ حَاسِدٍ إِذَا حَسَدَ (سورة الفلق:٥)

(I seek refuge) from the evil of the jealous person when he commits jealousy. (113:5)

See how Exalted Allah has mentioned the jealousy of a jealous person alongwith Satan and a sorcerer and has commanded us to seek refuge from all these! Now you can yourself feel what a grievous sin is jealousy. That is why Exalted Allah has commanded us to seek refuge with Him and His help against this vice.

3. The third evil of jealousy consists in the attack of useless grief and sufferings. These throw a burden on man's

mind and induce him to commit sins. In this context Ibn Samak (RA) has said:

لم ارظالماً أشبه بالمظلوم من الحاسد نفس دائم وعقلٌ هائم وغمٌ لازم .

I have not seen a wrongdoer more resembling the person wronged than a jealous person. He always remains dejected disturbed in his mentality and constantly suffering from painful worries and anxieties.

4. Fourthly, man's heart becomes deprived of spiritual insight and he loses the capacity of reflecting and acting upon any Divine Injunction. Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) has said:

"Always take to silence and quietude. This will inculcate in you Taqwa and piety. Do not be greedy, lest you should fall into trials and corruption. Refrain from commenting on others in order to remain safe from taunts and adverse remarks. Refrain from jealousy in order to attain sense and sensibility and spiritual insight."

5. Fifthly, jealousy leads to failure of objectives, dishonour and disgrace and defeat against enemies. Hazrat Hatim Asam (RA) has said:

"A jealous person is never a religious person. One who finds faults with others cannot be pious and devout. A backbiter is unable to lead a peaceful life. He is deprived of Allah's grace and help.

I say that a jealous person can never succeed in his programmes, because he desires that the bounties of Exalted Allah may be taken away from others and bestowed upon him. This is a wish which is impossible to materialize. His enemies are in fact Allah's favourite servants against whom the jealous person can never gain success. Hazrat Abu Yaqub (RA) has said:

> O Allah! Protect me from being jealous of the blessings which you have granted your servants and increase these blessings.

In short, jealousy is such a heinous sin that it reduces the reward of worship and leads to the sin of disobedience. It destroys peace and tranquillity, ease and comfort and, in turn, deprives the jealous person of his capacity to understand Deen. It causes failure and emboldens over him his enemies. It is the most dangerous of all the spiritual diseases and needs immediate treatment. So never be neglectful of seeking an effective remedy for this disease.

وا لله ولى التوفيق والهداية

THE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF HURRY AND HASTE

The habit of hurry and haste has the trend of involving man in sins. It puts an end to good intentions. Its adverse effects are of four kinds. Its addicts act with undue hurry in doing some good deed and attaining steadfastness therein, although the time appointed by Allah for this attainment may not have arrived yet. This affects the addicts in two ways. Either they become slack and neglectful in their worship sometime abandoning totally their مجاهده (striving), as they exaggerate and go to the extremes in their مجاهدات (strivings) with the natural result that they fail to reach their desired goal. The harms arising from remaining behind or exceeding the

prescribed limits in مجاهده can be traced to the habit of hurry and haste. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

ان دينا هذا متين فاوغل فيه برفق فان المنبت لا ارضا قطع ولا ظهرا أبقى.

This Deen of ours is a Deen of dignity and solemnity, so enter into it with dignity and solemnity. At the time of harvesting the crop the farmer neither turns the field upside-down completely nor does he leave the surface as before but ploughs it mildly to keep it cultivable.

There is a proverb in the Arabic language.(ان لم تستعجل تصل) If you are not hasty, you will reach the goal.

Secondly, sometimes the traveller on the path of Deen makes appeals to Allah with due sincerity and submission for something and hopes for a prompt acceptance of his appeal, even though in the knowledge of Allah, there is an appointed day for every thing. When there is some delay in the acceptance of his appeal, the traveller becomes dejected and gives up his مجاهده (striving) and gets far away from his goal.

Thirdly, some times this traveller on the path of Deen utters in a state of anger, curse on some Muslim on receiving some distress from the latter. He does this in undue haste and that Muslim perishes on account of that curse. In so doing the Salik (traveller) crosses the due limits and causes his own ruin (in so far as his Hereafter is concerned).

Exalted Allah has said:

وَيَدْعُ الْإِنسَانُ بِالشَّرِّ دُعَاءَهُ بِالْخَيْرِ وَكَانَ الْإِنسَانُ عَجُولًا. (بنی اسرائیل:١٥)

Man prays for evil as he would pray for good.
This is because man is hasty (in his actions).
(17:11)

Fourthly, the reality of worship is based on Taqwa and abstention which are attained by giving due thought and full consideration to all affairs and dealings. A man lacking in persevarance and steadfastness is devoid of the power of proper thinking and is hasty in every thing he does. A man addicted to this habit of hurry and haste is sure to stumble in his way, even in the matter of his eating and drinking. In a fit of hasts he may not mind in eating what is unlawful and forbidden, thus destroying his Taqwa and abstinence. Worship devoid of Taqwa has no value. It is very necessary and urgent to remedy and get rid of hurry and hastiness which cost the addict not only his own good and benefit but also become a cause of harm to another Muslim. How horrible!

THE DISEASE OF PRIDE

The disease of Pride and arrogance effaces all traces of goodness and piety. This is the worst vice in causing havoc to Deen. It launches a direct attSack on beliefs and tenets. If overlooked for sometime, it becomes incurable and gives rise to other diseases and vices which are not less than four in number, as mentioned below:

1. Being deprived of truth and truthfulness. The heart becomes blind to the verses dealing with knowledge about Allah. It is a very grievous vice in which the mind of a man becomes dull and impervious to understanding of Deen. Allah has said in the Holy Qura'n:

سَأَصْرِفُ عَنْ آيَاتِيَ الَّذِينَ يَتَكَبَّرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ . (سورة الاعراف : ١٤٦)

I shall turn away from My revelations those who show pride in the world wrongfully. (7:146)

Allah has said at another place in the Qura'n:

كَذٰلِكَ يَطْبَعُ اللّٰهُ عَلٰى كُلِّ قَلْبِ مُتَكَبِّرٍ جَبَّارٍ . (سورة المؤمن : ٣٥)

This does Allah put a seal on every arrogant disdainful heart. (40:35)

2. The wrath and punishment of Allah fall on the jealous person. Allah has said:

اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْتَكْبِرِيْنَ . (سورة النحل : ٢٣)

Certainly, He does not love the proud; (16:23)

It is narrated that Hazrat Moosa (Moses AS) asked Exalted Allah: O My Lord: Who is the most deserving of your wrath and displeasure? Exalted Allah told him (AS).

مَن تكبّر قلبهٗ و غلظ لسانه وصفق عينهٗ وبخلت يدهٗ وسآء خلقهٗ.

It is he whose heart is filled with pride and his tongue is filthy (i.e. abusive), his eyes are devoid of shame, his hands are miserly and he hears bad conduct and character.

3. Allah will put the proud to disgrace and dishonour in the Hereafter. Hazrat Hatim Asam (RA) has said:

Do not die in a state of pride greed and arrogance.

Allah does not cause the proud fellow to meet his death unless he is disgraced and dishonoured by his own family, relatives and servants.

Similarly the greedy does not meet his death unless he becomes destitute for a morsal of food and draught of water.

In the same way the arrogant person does not meet his death unless he is disgraced by being polluted with his own excerment and urine. It also occurs in the narratives that Exalted Allah does dishonour and disgrace the proud at any rate.

(4) The proud renders himself liable to Hell in the Hereafter. It occurs in a حدیث قدسی (Divine Hadith):

الکبریاء ردائی والعظمة ازری فمن نازعنی فی واحد منهما ادخلته فی نار جهنم.

Pride is My cloak and grandeur is My trousers. If anyone disputes with Me in anyone of these (two) I shall admit him into the Hell-Fire.

In other words, Pride and grandeur are two exclusive attributes of Almighty Allah which none is allowed to share with Him.

It is imperative to refrain from such a dangerous and deadly calamity which leads to loss of knowledge of Allah, inability to understand the commands of Allah, His displeasure, disgrace in this world and the Hereafter and painful torment therein. No wise person can be neglectful in the matter of such a harmful and destructive calamity. We should, therefore, try to save ourselves from this and seek refuge with Allah. This is a brief account of the four calamities, mentioned in the beginning. Each of these four

calamities are very dangerous in the sight of those wise and discreet men who are aware of the importance of the reform of their hearts.

وا لله تعالیٰ ولی العصمة وا لتوفیق

Thus, I have described the harms inherent in these four calamities. When they are so dangerous and harmful, it is necessary for us to know their reality and nature as well as the precautions needed to save ourselves from the harm they can cause to us. In the next pages I am going to discuss these topics.

This is a very comprehansive topic which I have dealt with in detail in Ihya-u-lloomiddin and in the "Secrets of the Religious Affairs. Only an urgently needed discourse will be furnished here.

THE REALITY OF HOPE

In the opinion of most Ulama "Hope means feeling sure that one will enjoy a long tenure of life on the other hand, if there is no such surity in the heart about a long life, and this hope is tempered with the belief that one's life and death depend on Allah's will and one has to do good as long as one is destined to live in this world, then this is called short hope.

If a man believes that after taking one breath he will remain alive till the next breath, such a man is regarded as one who entertains prolonged hopes. Such a belief is a sin, indeed, because it is tantamount to declaring something which Allah has kept guarded as a secret. If a man makes his life subordinate to the knowledge and will of Allah and says, "I shall ان شاء الله (God willing), live long", this will be called a "Renouncer of Hope" If there is a man who hopes for a long life with good intentions and wishes, this action will not come

within the definition of "Prolonged Hope". Instead, he will be called one who shortens one's hopes. It is because this man is not expressing a firm and decisive opinion on any one aspect of the issue. You too should take this course and keep always in view the bad end due to prolonged hopes.

There are two kinds of hopes:

1. Hopes of the general public.

2. Hopes of the previleged classes of the public. The hopes of the general pblic consist of collecting wordly resources and making long-Term Programmes. These and similar hopes are sins. As against this, it carries virtue and reward to shorten one's hopes relating to the worldly affairs. Exalted Allah has said:

ذَرْهُمْ يَأْكُلُوا وَيَتَمَتَّعُوا وَيُلْهِهِمُ الْأَمَلُ فَسَوْفَ يَعْلَمُونَ . (سورة الحجر:٣)

Let them eat and enjoy life, and let (false) hope beguile them. They will (soon) come to know this." (15:3)

On the other hand, the hopes of the privileged classes of the public are centred on a wish that man should be waiting for a long tenure of life for doing good deeds. Such a stand is more risky and less helpful in reformation and correction.

If a man is going to do some good deed, viz. Prayer or the like, he should not feel sure that he will complete that deed, because this will be tantamount to expressing a decision on something which is hidden and the result is known only to Allah. The best course in such matters is that he should seek Allah's help in doing the deed if it is good for him to do that. As an alternative, he should leave the matter of its completion

to the will of Exalted Allah. It is necessary to keep in view these conditions and limits to save oneself from the harms of prolonged hopes. Exalted Allah has commanded in the Qur'an His beloved, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) saying:

وَلَا تَقُولَنَّ لِشَيْءٍ إِنِّي فَاعِلٌ ذَٰلِكَ غَدًا إِلَّا أَن يَشَاءَ اللهُ (سورة الكهف: ٢٤-٢٥)

"And do not say about anything: I must do that tomorrow except if Allah wills it. (18:24-25)

The Ulama have advised as an alternative to prolonged hope a hope based on good intentions; They have therefore furnished hope by maintaining that one should make a firm intention to do some good deed with the belief that success in its completion and its acceptance depends only on the help and will of Exalted Allah.

This definition suggests that a good deed should he based on a firm intention but the prosecution and completion of the intention should be left to the will of Allah. A question arises why is it so? Why should not the beginning and the completion both be left to the will of Allah? This question has been answered by saying that it is quite all right to make a firm intention at the very outset, because as the deed has not been started yet, there is nu fear of Pride and ostentation. However, when the good deed has actually been commended and is in progress two hazards come into existence: Firstly, a doubt arises about the completion of the deed. Secondly, during the progress or completion of the deed it is feared lest Pride or ostentation should spoil the deed. It is, therefore, necessary to utter ان شاء الله (God willing) and to leave its completion to the will of Allah. The words ان شاء الله are uttered to ensure completion of the deed and the whole scheme is entrusted to the will of Allah to protect the deed from the vices of Pride

and ostentation. The intention so formed for doing a good deed is called نیت محمودہ (a Praiseworthy intention).

Apart from this, it should also be borne in mind that another way of refraining from prolonged hopes and adopting the process of shortening them as far as possible it is that man should always keep the memory of death fresh in his mind, that this death may overtake anyone all of a sudden and unawares.

It is necessary to understand all these points, lest your time should go waste in useless talks and unnecessary contacts with the people.

THE REALITY OF JEALOUSY

To desire that a Muslim may be deprived of his blessed gifts, his well-being and prosperity is jealousy. If it is not the desire that the blessing may be taken away from that Muslim but the desire is that it should accrue to the jealous person also, then it is called غبطة (Envy) which is called in the Urdu language رشك. This is not jealousy.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said that حسد is not lawful except in "two things". In this saying "حسد" means "غبطة" (i.e. envy). He (PBUH) uttered the word "حسد" (jealousy) metaphorically to mean thereby "غبطة" (envy), as the meanings of both the words are nearer to each other.

If a man desires that a blessing may be taken away from a brother Muslim which is not worthy of and good for him, such a desire is called غيرت (a form of envy with a good intention). This is the difference between the shades of meanings conveyed by the terms "حسد", "غبطة" and "غيرت" if it is the desire that the blessing should remain with the brother

Muslim, then the term vis-a-vis "حسد" is "نصیحت" meaning well-wishing.

Now, how to know that the blessing which a brother Muslim possesses is good or bad for him? A knowledge of this is necessary. Sometimes we feel that there is every probability that the blessing is good for the Muslim. In this situation we should act upon "نصیحت". If there is no such probability but the whole matter is doubtful even then it is not lawful to wish for its ruin. In such a situation the matter should be left to the knowledge and will of Allah.

Another way of refraining from حسد (jealousy) and of following "نصیحت" (well-wishing) in favour of the Muslims is that we should remember, and act upon, the injunctions which Exalted Allah has issued to maintain friendliness and sympathey with the Muslims. We should keep in view the rights of the Muslims including the safety of their wealth and lives. We should think of the benefit, to be earned in the Hereafter by cooperating with the Muslims and rendering assistance to them and participating in their social gatherings. The greatest benefit lies in that a Muslim shall intercede for another Muslim in the Hereafter.

By thinking on these lines it is possible to be safe from committing the sins of jealousy and malice against a brother Muslim.

THE REALITY OF HASTINESS

(Hastiness) is instinct present in the heart which urges a man to do something without thinking about the result. In opposition to it is the instinct of اناءت (slow action), that is, doing something with patience and due consideration. This is an instinct which promotes the habit of working with a slow

pace after taking into consideration all the pros and cons of an issue.

There is another term توقف (to pause), it opposite term being تعسف (to act recklessly). (توقف and اناءت are almost synonimous terms عجلت and تعسف are also synonimous terms).

My shaikh has pointed out a difference between توقف and اناءت He (RA) has said that توقف means doing something after due thought and consideration. To observe moderateness and patience after having started some work is اناءت

To create اناءت in the heart it is necessary that man should visualize the harms and vices of hastiness and the regret resulting from this haste. This is expected to promote the habit of moderateness and perseverance and banish the habit of haste and hurry.

THE REALITY OF PRIDE

To think that one is greater and higher than others is called کبر (Pride). The opposite terms are تواضع (modesty) and انکساری (humbleness). Pride and modesty are each of two kinds. Viz (1) general pride and (2) specific pride and similarly (1) general modesty and (2) specific modesty.

General Modesty: It is to lead an ordinary style of living with ordinary clothes, poor housing and cheap and low class of worldly resources.

General Pride: It is just the opposite of general modesty. In general Pride man adopts a very high standard of living in every matter.

Specific Modesty: In this a man tries to subdue his self and make it follow the path of truth.

Specific Pride: In this a man leaves his self free to do whatever it likes. This is a sin. The way to stabilize general modesty is that a man should remember his reality, his birth and the torment at the time of death.

A saint has said:

اوّلك نطفةٌ مذرة وآخرك جيفةٌ قذرة وأنت فيما بينهما حامل العذرة .

It is your origin that you were a dirty drop of semen and in the end you will become filthy carrion. During these two stages you are carrying in your body dirt and filth.

The way to stabilize specific modesty is that a man should remember the fate and the punishment of those who insist on disobedience and wrong-doing.

What has been stated above is enough for a man of insight to reform his heart.

وا لله الموفق والمعين

SECTION 5

SAFEGUARDING THE STOMACH

A man walking on the path of worship and devotion must safeguard his stomach. This is a difficult task indeed. It is awfully harmful and equally difficult to reform it. The stomach is the centre and, store of all bodily powers and energies. It is the part of the human body from which comes out the weakness or the strength, piety righteourness, wickedness or disobedience.

It is imperative for you to obstain totally from unlawful things and things of doubtful nature and even lawful things in

undue and superfluous quantities if you want to lead a useful and meaningful life.

It is necessary to abstain from unlawful and dubious things for three reasons.

1. To protect yourself from Hell-Fire: Allah has said:

إِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ يَأْكُلُوْنَ أَمْوَالَ الْيَتٰمٰى ظُلْمًا إِنَّمَا يَأْكُلُوْنَ فِىْ بُطُوْنِهِمْ نَارًا وَسَيَصْلَوْنَ سَعِيْرًا . (سورة النسآء : ١٠)

Indeed, those who eat the wealth of orphans wrongfully, they do but eat fire into their bellies and they will be exposed to burning fire. (4:10)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

كُلّ لحمٍ نُبت من سُحت النار اولى به.

That flesh is more deserving of Hell-Fire which has grown from unlawful food.

Another reason for abstaining from unlawful food is that one who eats much food is turned out of the Divine Court and is not enabled to offer genuine worship and devotion. Only a pious and purified man can worship Allah sincerely.

Exalted Allah has forbidden a polluted man to enter a mosque. He has forbidden a man without ablution to touch the Holy Qur'an. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an.

وَلَا جُنُبًا إِلَّا عَابِرِىْ سَبِيْلٍ حَتّٰى تَغْتَسِلُوْا . (سورة النساء :٤٣)

A polluted man cannot enter a mosque without taking a both unless he is a passer by (4:43)

It has been said at another place in the Holy Qur'an:

لَا يَمَسُّهُ إِلَّا الْمُطَهَّرُوْنَ . (سورة الواقعة : ٧٩)

None can touch it (the Holy Qur'an), except the purified ones: (56:79)

Look here! A polluted man is farbidden to enter a mosque and a man without ablution has been forbidden to touch the Holy Qur'an. How can then that man enter a mosque who is polluted with the filth of unlawful and doubtful things (i.e. ill-gotten income etc.) How can such a man claim to serve Allah or get pleasure from his remembrances of Allah? He can not be enabled to indulge in such righteous acts.

Hazrat Manar Dari (RA) has said:

Obedient devotion is a priceless treasure-home. Its key is Du'a (supplication). Its teeth are lawfully earned sustenance. How can the lock of the door be opened with the key which has no teeth. None can get access to the treasure unless the door is opened. (So obedient devotion is also not possible without lawful sustenance).

Thirdly, not only is the eater of unlawful money deprived of good deeds but if he ever happens to do some good deed, it is not accepted by Allah but is thrust back on the person's face.

The labour and the efforts of such a person in offering worship and devotion go waste.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

كم من قائمٍ لَيس لهُ من قيامهِ الآ السهرُ وكم من صائم ليس له من صيامهِ الا الجوع والظماء.

How many men there are who keep vigil in the nights but they get nothing from this except waking in the night, similarly, how many fasting persons there are who get nothing from their fasting except hunger and thirst.

Hazrat Ibn Abbas (RAA) has said:

لا يَقبل الله تعالٰى صلوٰة امرءٍ فى جوفهِ حرامٌ

Exalted Allah does not accept the prayer of that person who has eaten in his belly unlawful food.

As regards the question of using lawful income in a quantity more than barely necessary, it is also very harmful for the servants in general and for the devotees in particular. By pondering over the matter I have discovered the vices in this.

1. By eating more than necessary even lawful income, the heart becomes hard and its light disappears. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

لا تُميتوا القلب بكثرة الطعام والشراب فان القلب يموت كالزرع اذا كثر عليه الماء.

Do not bring death on your heart by gluttony as the heart dies like a cultivated field when the irrigation is more than necessary.

Some past saints have illustrated this truth by saying that the stomach below the heart is like a boiling kettle below the heart. The vapours of the stomach rise up to the heart and spoil it.

2. Excessive eating instigates the limbs with mischief and wrong-doing which in turn, urges man to evils and shameless acts, as this creates pride in the hearts and instigates the eyes to cast sinful glances, the ears become fond of hearing objectionable talks, the tongue is prepared to speak nonsense the private parts desire to their lusts and the legs ready to proceed to places of sins. On the other hand if man eats a little less than his hunger all these limbs of the body remain calm and quiet and are not incited to sins and vices, nor are they glad to see these vicious scenes.

Hazrat Abu Jafar (RA) has said:

> The stomach is such a limb of the body that when it is kept hungry the other limbs of the body remain satisfied, calm and quiet. They do not demand anything that is evil and vicious. When the stomach is kept fully satisfied, the other limbs become hungry and call for sinful acts.

In short, the right or wrong of man's actions and talks depends on the quality of a man's foood. if he takes forbidden food it will result in sins and vices. Excessive eating will increase nonsense and useless action ties. This food is like seeds and all the actions and talks of man are like plants.

3. Excessive eating and drinking lead to reduction in knowledge and understanding, because the habit of excessive eating puts an end to intellect and understanding.

Hazrat Darani (RA) has said:

If you want that all your needs of the world and the Hereafter be granted then try for that with an empty stomach. This is because excessive eating makes the mind, and the intellect dull. This fact is known to every experienced person.

4. There is a considerable reduction in the acts of worship and devotion on account of excessive eating. This places a burden on the mind and all other senses, causes sleepiness in the eyes, the limbs of the body become lax and despite his efforts man is not able to perform anything. He is seen lying here and there lethargic and listless.

There is an Arabic proverb.

اذا كُنت بطِّينًا فعد نفسك زمينًا.

If you are an excessive eater then count yourself us the ground (unable to do anything except lying down).

It is related that once Hazrat Yahya (AS) saw Iblis going somewhere with many nets. When he (AS) asked Iblis about them, he replied saying: These are nets of luxuries and lusts to trap man. Hazrat Yahya (AS) asked if there was any net for him (AS). Iblis replied in the negative, saying: Only once I spread my net for you when you had eaten your fill and as a result it became difficult for you to get up for your prayer.

Hearing this Hazrat Yahya (AS) said to himself (AS): By Allah, I shall never eat my fill in the future. To this Iblis replied: I too shall not tell anyone this secret.

Now consider that this is the condition of a personality who ate his fill only once in his life. Can a person take to worship who never remains hungry even once in his life?

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) has said:

Worship is an art which can be learnt in privacy and seclusion by remaining hungry.

5. Excessive eating destroys the sweetness of worship. Hazrat Siddiq Akbar (RAA) has said:

ما شبعتُ منذ أسلمتُ لأجد حلاوة عبادة ربّى وما رويتُ منذ أسلمت اشتياقًا إلٰى لقاء ربّى.

I never ate my fill since I embraced Islam in order to enjoy the sweetness of my Lord's worship, nor did I drink water to my fill in my fondness to meet my Lord.

These qualities belong to persons possessing spiritual insight and Hazrat Siddiq (RAA) is also one of them. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) referred to this quality of Hazrat Siddiq Akbar (RAA) when he (PBUH) said:

ما فضّلكُم ابو بكرٍ بفضل صومٍ ولا صلوةٍ و انما هو شئٌ وقّرفى نفسه .

"Abu Baker (RAA) is not superior to you because of fasting and prayers. It is a secret quality in his heart that has bestowed upon him this superiority.

Hazrat Darani (RA) has said:

أحلىٰ ما تكون العبادة اذا التزق بطنى بظهرى

My worship is sweetest when my belly sticks to my back (i.e. when I am hungry)

6. Excessive eating instigates man to what is unlawful and of doubtful piety,because what is always a scarecity of lawful things and they are available only to the extent of the bare necessities. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

ان الحلال لا یا تیك الا قوتًا والحرام یأتیك جزافًا جزافًا.

"Lawful money will come to you only to the minimum limits needed. But unlawful money will come to you in large amounts.

7. The mind and heart of an excessive eater always remain occupied in earning more and more money than the need. All the facilities of his mind and body are occupied in earning unlawful money in excess of his needs and in the preparation and the eating of his food. After taking his food he is occupied in the treatment of the diseases that befall him on account of excessive eating. There are many other vices in excessive eating from the religious point of view. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

The root-cause of every disease is indigestion and the cure of every disease lies in eating less and remaining hungry.

Hazrat Malik bin Dinar (RA) has said:

O people! I had to resort to the latrine again and again (on account of excessive eating). I felt ashamed for this before my Allah and wished if He should make my sustenance in the stone and pebbles which I would suck till my death.

8. Excessive eating will be the cause of a severe reckoning in the Hereafter and cause of the torment due to throes of death at the time of dying. It occurs in the narratives:

ان شدّة سكرات الموت على قدر لذّات الدّنيا فمن أكثر من هذه أكثر له من تلك.

"The torture of the throes of death comes in proportion to the enjoyments of the worldly luxuries and tastes. So. the more the worldly enjoyments the more the severity of the throes of death.

9. Excessive eating leads to reduction in the rewards of the Hereafter. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an.

أَذْهَبْتُمْ طَيِّبَاتِكُمْ فِي حَيَاتِكُمُ الدُّنْيَا وَاسْتَمْتَعْتُم بِهَا فَالْيَوْمَ تُجْزَوْنَ عَذَابَ الْهُونِ بِمَا كُنتُمْ تَسْتَكْبِرُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ بِغَيْرِ الْحَقِّ وَبِمَا كُنتُمْ تَفْسُقُونَ. (سورة الاحقاف: ٢٠)

You squandered your good things in your worldly life and sought enjoyment therefrom. Now this day you are rewarded with the doom of ignominy, because you were disdainful in the world without a right and because you used to transgress (the limits). (46:20)

Thus, the more you enjoy in this world, the lesser will become your share in the blessings of the Hereafter.

That is why when Exalted Allah offered the world to the Holy Prophet (PBUH), he (PBUH) said:

"If you enjoy these pleasures in the world, your enjoyments in the Hereafter will not be diminished.

This offer was made to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as a special favour and exclusive award for him (PBUH). With this exception, the general principle is the same as explained above. If Exalted Allah showers favours on anyone, it is quite another matter.

If occurs in narraives that once Hazrat Khalid bin Walid (RAA) invited Hazrat Farooq (RAA) to food. When Hazrat Farooq (RAA) arrived to participate in the feast and saw the food, he (RAA) said:

> If all this preparation is for my sake, what will be the share of those poor and destitute migrants who have passed away and who had not got even bread of barley to eat.

Hazrat Khalid bin Walid (RAA) said: They will God willing, enter the Paradise of Firdous. Hazrat Farooq (RAA) replied to this saying: If they succeed in winning Paradise and we receive our share in this world there will be a great difference between their status and our status.

Once Hazrat Farooq (RAA) was feeling severely thirsty. He asked someone to give him water, the man offered him a pot full of Nabiz (a kind of beverage). When Hazrat Farooq (RAA) put the pot to his mouth he (RAA) found it cool and sweet. At this he (RAA) stopped and heaved a sigh. The man said: By Allah, I did my best to sweeten the drink. Hazrat Farooq (RAA) said: It is this sweetness that has stopped me from drinking it. If the anxiety about the Hereafter had not been with me I would have shared with you this delicacy:

10. Taking food more than necessary will entail a very severe rackoning in the Hereafter. Excessive eating with attract curse and blame. Men will be put to shame for seeking enjoyments and luxuries through excessive

eating. They will have to render account even for using lawful things. They will be censured for hankering after their lusts and desires. They will be punished for using unlawful things and will face ruin for having adopted decorative objects and ostentation.

It is, therefore, necessary for everyone to abstain from these ten vices. Even one of these is horrible enough for a man of spiritual insight. It is most imperative for the traveller on the path of Deen and the devout to abstain from forbidden things and things of a doubtful nature, so that they may be saved from the torment of Hell. It is equally necessary to abstain from using even lawful things more than barely needed, to safeguard yourself from being caught in some evil and corruption and detention on the Day of Judgement on account of detailed accounts taking.

THE REALITY OF UNLAWFUL THINGS AND INJUNCTIONS ABOUT THINGS OF UNLAWFUL AND DOUBTFUL NATURE.

You should note that I have detailed everything about these issues in my book titled "The secrets of Religious Affairs" I have also included in the Ihya-u-lloomiddin an independent chapter on this topic. In this book, "Minhajul-Abideen", I shall give such a brief description of the topic as will suffice for those under training in the journey to the destination of Deen.

Some wise saints have defined حرام (forbidden or unlawful) as under:

> Anything is حرام (forbidden) which is known for certain to belong to some person and is not lawful for another person to use it from the Shara'ee point of view.

If it is not known for certain that it is another's property, but there is only a probability that it may belong to another person then it is not حرام but it is of a doubtful nature (مشتبه)

Some Ulama are of the opinion that a thing is حرام even if it is most probable that it is another's property. This is because there are many injunctions in which things of probable ownership have been treated on the same footing as things of certian and assured ownership.

If there is a thing which is subject to doubt about its being unlawful or lawful and the possibility is equal either way and you become inclined to prefer one of the two possibilities, this also becomes مشتبه (of doubtful nature) This is because a possibility of its being unlawful has cropped up.

It is an obligatory duty to abstain from something which is proved to be unlawful. As regards things coming under the definition of مشتبه (doubtful), it is a matter of Taqwa (Righteousnes) to abstain from them.

If a question is put as to the accepting or rejecting some gift from the rulers or dignitaries of the present times then there are different opinions of the competent ulama on this issue.

A group says that there is no harm in accepting that gift which is not known with assured certainty to be unlawful (حرام). In the opinion of another group it is not right to accept even such a gift of doubtful nature. They hold that the dignitaries of this age mostly possess unlawful (حرام) wealth and property. In their case lawful wealth is something very rare.

There is yet another group who are of the opinion that it is quite all right to accept gifts from the dignitaries of these times, whether the man accepting the gift is from among the rich or the poor, provided that the gift is not unlawful as a matter of certainty. If the receiver receives a gift the lawfulness of which is doubtful the woe lies on the giver. This group bases its stand in this matter on the fact that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) accepted the gifts of Maqooqas (Ruler of Eqypt), although he was a Kafir (nonbeliever). In the same way the Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to borrow money from the Jews of Madinah Munaw-Warah about whom the Holy Qur'an has said that they are أَكَّٰلُونَ لِلسُّحْتِ (eaters of unlawful money) - (5:42)

They also say that there are many companious (RAA) like Hazrat Abu Hurairah Hazrat Ibn Abbas and Hazrat Ibn Umar (RAA) who, in their times, faced despotic relers and accepted their gifts.

Some Ulama say that it is not right for anyone, whether he is rich or poor, to accept gifts from tyrant rulers and kings, because they have become renowned as tyrants, In view of this high probability, it is necessary to abstain from their gifts and grants.

There is another group of Ulama who say that, if it is not known with certainty, that someone's wealth is unlawful, then a grant therefrom is lawful for a poor man but is not lawful for a rich man. If that poor man thinks that the money has been illegally seized from someone, then it can be lawful for the poor man to receive that money only with the intention that he will restore it to its rightful owner, otherwise it will not be lawful. This group of Ulama also hold that it is lawful for a poor man to accept and use gifts from the ruler of the time, because it will be either from the personal property of the ruler or from the collection of the revenues over which the poor

man has a Shara'ee right. In the same way the learned men and scholars also may receive and use gifts from the rulers and dignitaries. Hazrat Ali (RAA) has said:

> A man, who has embraced Islam of his own sweet will and also recites the Holy Qur'an openly, is entitled to receive an annual grant of one hundred Dirhams.
>
> According to another narrative the amount is two hundred Dirhams. If this right is not received by the claimant in this world, he will be receive it in the Hereafter.

Thus, in such matters the Ulama as well as the poor have a greater right to such money and can receive their due shares.

Hazrat Ata (RA) has said that anyone's money may have got mixed up with another man's robbed money and it is not possible to separate the two kinds from one another. A ruler may have in his custody some robbed money but the owner of that money or his heirs may not be traceable. In either case this money may be spent in charity. It is however, at the option of the poor needy to accept or reject such charity from the distributer. It is suggested that in such complicated problems the respected Ulama and the Muftis should not issue Fatawa (rulings) without proper investigation of the very minute details of each case.

It will be going out of my way to deal with this issue in fuller details. For this purposes the chapter on "Lawful and unlawful" of my book Ihya-u-Uloomiddin may be seen.

Two other questions arise in this behalf:

1. What about gifts offered by traders and merchants who generally do not care in their business what is lawful or unlawful?

2. What is the injunction about gifts offered by common friends and acquaintances? The answer to this question is as under:

If the apparent condition of a man is quite sound in the light of the Sharee'ah and there is no apparent hitch, there is no harm in accepting gifts from such persons, as according to the Sharee'ah it is not necessary: to probe deeply into the conditions of a Muslim. To doubt about the purity or otherwise of the gift will mean forming a bad opinion about the giver of the gift and doubting his integrity and forming such poor and insulting opinion about a Muslim have been forbiddin in the Ahadith which emphasize that only good and favourable opinions should be formed about Muslims.

As a principle, it is allowed in the Sharee'ah to accept gifts and charity if there is no apparent hitch therein requiring their rejection. If it is known for certain that the gift or the charity is from unlawful money, then if must be rejected according to the injunction of the Sharee'ah.

The principle of Taqwa (Righteousness), however, demands that no gift should be accepted without thorough investigation. Even if there is a slight doubt about its lawfulness and purity, it should be rejected.

It is related about Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddique (RAA) that once one of his slaves presented him (RAA) some milk which he drank without putting any question about the source of the milk. When the slave expressed his surprise to Hazrat Siddiq Akbar (RAA) the latter inquired about the reality. The slave told Hazrat Siddiq (RAA) that he had received it in

return for some witchcraft which he had performed for a man during the pre-Islamic days. Hearing this Hazrat Siddiq Akbar (RAA) vomited that milk by thrusting his finger into his throat and said:

> "O my Allah! This is all I could do kindly pardon me for the milk that may have remained in my stomach.

It appears from this narration that it is necessary for a mn of Taqwa not to eat anything without a thorough investigation about the purity and lawfulness of that.

One may ask if there is a contradiction between the etiquettes of Taqwa and the injunctions of the Sharee'ah.

The answer to this question is that the injunctions of the external Sahree'ah seek to provide ease and facility. That is why the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

بُعِثْتُ با لحنيفيّة السمحة.

I have been sent with an easy and natural faith.

Taqwa involves some severity and hardship. It is wrong to think that Taqwa and the injunctions of the Sharee'ah are two different principles. Both spring up from one and the same Sharee'ah. The Islamic Sharee'ah issues injunctions about the lawfulness or unlawfulness of something and also about the superiority, excellence and precaution about something. The injunction about lawfulness or unlawfulness is known as an injunction of taking precaution about something is called Taqwa. Both these types of injunctions emanate from the same source, although they appear to be defferent from one another.

Here another question arises. When it is necessary for a man of Taqwa to carry out an investigation for every thing, then it will be very difficult for him in these days to use the daily necessaries of life. This may be answered by saying that Taqwa is indeed a very difficult discipline in which man has to suppress his self and train it to face hradships. Not only it is difficult but almost impossible to take to Taqwa without undergoing these hardships.

It is related about many sufis and men of Taqwa that leaving their homes in populated towns they retired to jungles and deserts, living on only grass and wild friuts etc. A man desirous of Taqwa must be prepared to face hardships and severity in life.

As for those who are compelled by circumstance to take to life, in towns and cities among the general public they should use the facilities of life in these places to the minimum, as it is lawful to eat even dead meat only in very hard and pressing circumstances. Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) has said:

فَسد السّوق فعليك بالقُوت .

> Corruption has spread in the market so earn a living to the barest minimum needed.

It is said that Hazrat Wuhab bin Ward used to starve continuously for three days, thereafter he would take a load of bread and pray thus:

> O Allah! You know that I do not have the strength (without eating) to worship you. I fear my weakness, otherwise I would not have eaten this. O Allah! If this bread contains anything that is unlawful or forbidden, do not take me to task for that.

Thereafter he (RA) would eat the bread after soaking it in water.

According to me, this is Taqwa of a high order and degree. It is necessary for those who are not at this high stage of Taqwa to take precaution as far as possible. A man will attain Taqwa in proportion to his precaution and abstention.

It is a well known fact that the more you work the more you will attain success. Exalted Allah does not let the labour of the righteous go waste.

THE LIMITS OF WHAT IS LAWFUL AND THE CATEGORIES OF WHAT IS PERMISSIBLE

So far, we have discussed the details of unlawful money and resources. It is necessary now to examine the limits of what is lawful and at which stage the lawful turns into what is superfluous and unnecessary for which a man will be questioned in the Hereafter. Again what is the desirable limit of lawful things?

There are three categories of مباحات (permissible things).

1. Things and objects that are used for show pride and exhibition. Those who use such things will be detained in the Hereafter for questioning and they will be put to shame. Exalted Allah does not like at all the use of such things, as they give rise to pride and arrogance in a man's heart-attributes which lead to Hell. The use of مباحات to the above mentioned extent is a sin. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an;

اِنَّمَا الْحَيٰوةُ الدُّنْيَا لَعِبٌ وَّلَهْوٌ وَّزِيْنَةٌ وَّتَفَاخُرٌ بَيْنَكُمْ وَتَكَاثُرٌ فِى الْاَمْوَالِ وَالْاَوْلَادِ.

.... The life of this world is only play and pageantry and decoration and rivalry in wealth and children. (57:20)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

مَن طلبَ الدُّنيا حلالاً مباهيًا مكاثرًا مفاخراً مرائياً لَقِيَ الله تعالىٰ وهو عليه غضبان.

He who earns the lawful resources of the world for the sake of Pride quantity, fame and ostensation will meet Allah in a state in which Allah will be angry with him.

In the above verse of the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith a severe warning has been given to those who use the world for the sake of show and pride.

The second category of مباحات (premissiable things) relates to things which are used only to satisfy one's lusts and desires. This too is objectionable about which the man concerned will be questioned in the Hereafter. Allah Almighty has said:

ثُمَّ لَتُسْئَلُنَّ يَوْمَئِذٍ عَنِ النَّعِيْمِ . (سورة التكاثر : ٨)

You will surely be questioned that day about the blessings (granted to you in this world) (102:8)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

وحلالُها حساب ط

There will be reckoning also about the lawful things of the world.

The third category of مباحات is that these should be used in the minimum quantities needed, so that it may be possible to indulge in worship and devotion in the desired way which calls for no reckoning in the Hereafter. This way is praise-worthy in the sight of Exalted Allah who has said in the Holy Qur'an:

أُولَٰئِكَ لَهُمْ نَصِيبٌ مِّمَّا كَسَبُوا . (سورة البقرة : ٢٠٢)

They are those for whom there is a share out of what they have earned. (2:202)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

من طلب الدنيا حلالا استعفافا عن المسئلة وتعطفا على جده وسعيا على عياله جآء يوم القيامة ووجهه كالقمر لية البدر.

The face of that man will shine like the full moon who earns the world by lawful means of abstain from begging, to be kind to his neighbour and to support his family.

This honour is due to the fact that the worldly resources are earned for righteous aims and for the pleasure of Exalted Allah.

What are those conditions and principles by observing which the use of مباح (Permissible) things become a righteous act? This is possible in two ways (1) Specific situation and (2) personal intention and decision.

Specific situation means a state of extreme necessity and compulsion. Only then مباح (permissible) things should be used. This so compelling a situation that if a man fails to use مباح things he will be held responsible for disobeying a requirement of the Sharee'ah. This is because by failing to use مباح things he will become weak in body and unable to

discharge his obligatory and sunnah duties according to the prescribed rules of the Sharee'ah.

To use مباح things under personal intention and decision means that resort should be taken to them with the intention of acquiring ability and strength to work for ones Hereafter. Without this ability none can discharge his religious duties with due concentration and devotion. In other words, the man should feel in his heart that he is going to use مباح (permissible) things for no other purpose than worship. If both these aspects are present in the use of permissible things then this is a matter of great goodness and righteousness. If anyone of these two aspects is absent, then it will not be desireable and an excellent act to use مباح (permissible) things.

In the matter of using مباح (permissible) things, it is necessary that there should be a pious intention of putting in worship and one should be steadfast in this intention.

My Shaikh (RA) has advised that it is necessary to keep in view three points. Two of these have already been mentioned above and the third point demands that the intention should be firm and permanent.

A few questions may arise in this context.

Is it a sin deserving punishment to use مباح (permissible) things for the sake of fame?

Is it indispensable to use مباح (permissible) things under very pressing circumstance?

The answers to these question are : The use of مباحات during compelling circumstances is not an obligatory duty, it is only an act of superiority and it is desireable. The use of مباحات for the sake of fame and show is a sin but not liable to

punishment. This will only be condemmed questioned in the Hereafter.

One may ask, as to what is meant by questioning and detaining (from Paradise) the servant for this? It means that it will be asked on the Day of Judgement how a thing was procured and how it was spent in the world, and with what intention.

On the Day of Resurrection the servants of Allah will be stopped from entering Paradise before rendering their accounts. It will be a very hard and trying time when the people will be in a state of great fear, thirst and hunger.

When Exalted Allah has permitted the use of مباحات why should there be blaming and disgracing for that? The answer is that this will be to condemn the man's indiscipline and bad behavior. For example if a man is sitting round the kings dining table, he shall be reprimanded for his breach of etiquette, if he commits that.

Exalted Allah has created mankind for his worship so man is duty bound to secure Allah's pleasure in all his sayings and doings. A man will deserve only blame and disgrace if he hankers after his desires and overlooks Allah's pleasure and gives up His worship without a justification. You should try to grasp intelligently what I have stated here and earn reward in the world and in the Hereafter by acting upon the advice given

فا لله تعالى ولىٌّ العصمة والتوفيق

SECTION 6

My Brother! It is a binding upon you to cross this difficult and arduous valley. This is indispensable for achieving success in the Hereafter. One who has deviated from

the straight path has done so on account of the charms of this world and the seductions of his self. I have mentioned many events, in my books, Ihya-u-ullommiddin, Kitabu-Asrar, and Kitabul Qurbat-e-ilal-laah, which will be helpful in crossing this valley.

It was my objective in this brief pamphlet that Exalted Allah may teach me the reality of self, its diseases and the means of their cure and reform, so I have stated in this small book only the relevant points. I hope that these points and signs will provide guidance to men of thought and reflection. In this chapter I am going to deal with the world, the creation the self and Satan and the points helpful in attaining safety from the trap of Satan.

O my Brother! There are three reasons for you to abstain from the filth and obstacles of the world:

1. If you are a man of wisdom and insight then for abstaining from the filth of the world, it is enough for you to know that the world is an enemy of Allah and Allah is your friend. The human intelligence is a great working capital of man but this world is a disturbing factor for this intelligence.

2. If you are not a man of insight but are a man of courage trying to worship Allah, it is enough for you to know that the anxiety about the world creates a hurdle in the path of worship and good deeds. How harmful then will the world in itself prove in the path of worship and deiation?

3. If you are neither a man of insight nor of courage and ambition, but you are among the negligent lot you should note that you have to leave the world one day. Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) has said:

Even if it is supposed that the world is going to be everlasting, you will not remain in the world for ever to receive benefit from it. What is then the use of hankering after the world? What is the use of wasting the precious days of life for it.

How nicely same poet has sung!

هب الدّنيا تُساق اليك عفواً
اليس مصير ذاك الى زوال

The resources of the world are being driven towards you but they are destined to perish one day.

ماترجوا لعيشٍ ليس يبقى
وشيكا قد تغيره الليالى

What (comfort) can you expect from this fleeting ease and rest which is going to perish soon through the vicissitudes of the time.

وما دنياك الامثل ظل
أظلّك ثمّ اذن بارتحال

The example of the world is like a shadow which disappears soon after providing you some shade. It is, therefore, not right for a wise man to be beguiled by the charms of the world. There is another couplet:

اضغاث نوم او كظل زائل
ان اللبيب بمثلها لايخدع

The world is like a dream or a fleeting shadow. A wise man is not deceived by such transitary things.

It is also necessary to remain safe from the mischief and evils of Satan. It is enough to note what Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an addressing the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

وَقُلْ رَّبِّ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ هَمَزَاتِ الشَّيَاطِيْنِ ○ وَاَعُوْذُ بِكَ رَبِّ اَنْ يَّحْضُرُوْنِ ○ (سورة المؤمنون:٩٧–٩٨).

> And say (O Prophet): My Lord: I seek refuge with you from the whisperings of the devils. I also seek refuge with you that they be present with me. (23:97-98)

Now look! When the Holy Prophet (PBUH) being the most righteous and pious and dignified of all creation, is seeking refuge with Allah from the evils of Satan, where do we sinners stand? We are more needy to protect ourselves from Satan's deception and seduction.

You should also safeguard yourself from contacts with the public because in this lies the possibility of destruction of your Hereafter. This is because there is risk for you either way, whether you try to please them or displease them. If you please them you may fall a victim to pride and arrogance through their flattery and if you displease them, they may cause harm to your life. In short, in either way lies your loss, whether you praise them or speak ill of them. They will weep only three days on your death and then forget you after that. At this stage only Exalted Allah will be with you. It is, therefore a matter of great loss to waste one's time and be negligent in the matter of remembering Allah and in obeying Him. Ultimately you have to return to Him and He alone is your helper after death. He alone supplies everyones needs you should, therefore, turn to none but Him in all your difficulties and calamities. So you must act upon my advice as best as possible in the hope that Allah may, by His grace, grant us right advice and guidance.

Censure Of The Self

It is also necessary to censure and condemn the self. You can experience the mischief of the self from your own daily affairs. Some of the evil trends of the self are: false and dirty thoughts of the self; anti-sharee'ah activities; becoming worse than animals during fits of lusts and anger; weeping like innocent children at times of distress and hardship; becoming worse than Pharaoh at times of ease and enjoyments; go mad in hunger and becoming rebellious when satisfied and contented, and so on so forth. All these are enough to prove how despicable and evil disposed in this self of man. A poet has said:

كحمار السوء ان اشبعه
رمح الناس وان جاع نهق

This self is like an ill tempered ass that when its hunger is satisfied it tramples upon the people and when it is hungry it brays.

Some saints have said:

This rebellious and ugly self is so mean and ignorant that when it is prepared to commit some sin or to satisfy its lust, it will never desist from its vicious decision and it must carry out its intention however sincerely you may try to stop it from its sin in the name Allah, or the Prophets (AS) the Hereafter, the Holy Scriptures and the past saints and righteous men, or you may remind it of the horrors of the grave, the Day of Judgement, Paradise and Hell etc.

You can have and idea of its meanness, if after giving it one loaf of bread you withhold the

other loaf that it may reduce its greed and give up its desire, and lusts. (But it will not).

It is, therefore not at all good to be neglectful of this self because Exalted Allah who is well-Aware of its reality and nature has said in the Holy Qur'an.

إِنَّ النَّفْسَ لَأَمَّارَةٌ بِالسُّوءِ. (سورة يوسف:٥٣)

The self is indeed always instigating to evil. (12:53)

Hazrat Ahmad bin Balakha (RA) has said that once he felt a desire to take part in Jihad (Holy-war) and my self forced me to join this war. He felt quite happy at the conduct of his self, although Allah has said that the self always instigates towards evil. How is it possible? This cannot be possible. It really intended to get me out of the loveliness of my retired life and involve me in contacts with the public, so that it may itself remain in comfort and try to show to the people its piety, isolated life and regard and respect among the people. I told it that I would never take it to the people and it too agreed to this: At this I also felt surprised that it agreed to a proposal against its own nature thinking that there is no doubt about the veracity of the Holy Qur'an (that the self enjoins on evil) I replied to him, saying: I am ready to take part in Jihad against the enemy, but you are my foremost enemy. I shall, therefore, launch a jihad first against you. This did not have any effect on the self, so I told it many other things against it. Even then if was not excited. I was then very much surprised. Then I made a Du'a (supplication) to Exalted Allah saying: O Allah regard you and your word as true and I regard the self as a liar. So O, Allah let me know the secret and reality of this matter. Allah informed me, of the reality through an inspiration and felt as if the self was thus addressing me:

> O Ahmad you torture and kill me by refraining, from lust, and desires and opposing me in everything, and none knows your pitiable condition. If you take part in a Jihad you will kill me once for all and I shall get rid of you for ever. Thereafter I shall announce to all that Ahmad has attained martyrdom. This will bring me fame and status.

Ahmad bin Arqam (RA) has said that after getting this reply he decided not to take part in Jihad that year.

Now consider, how fraudulent and treacherer this self is that he mullifies good deeds even after the death of the doer. A poet has said:

توق نفسك تأمن غوائلها
فالنفس أخبث من سبعين شيطانًا

> Protect yourself from the devastation worked by the self as it is more heinous than seventy devils.

You should, therefore, always rem^in cautious against this treacherous and despicable self and be steadfast in trying to save yourself from this self. By so doing you will-God willing- remain safe from the mischief and harms of the self.

You should also use Taqwa to stop the self from sins and lusts, as there is no remedy other than Taqwa.

How To Be Safe From The Devastations Worked By The Self

Now I am giving you an infallible remedy for the harms and devastations done by the self. It is as follows:

There are two types of worship:

1. Injunctions to do something.

2. Injunctions to refrain from doing something. The sum-total of these two is called Taqwa.

It is more important to refrain from (ماموارات) things and acts forbidden than to do those which have been commanded to be done. It is most righteous to save oneself from doing what has been forbidden.

The beginners in the path of Deen lay stress on the injunctions to do certain acts, fasting during days and offering optional prayers during nights. However, those who are men of spiritual insight and have completed the study and course of Deen try first to refrain from the forbidden things and acts. They protect their hearts from thoughts about what is not related to Allah. They protect their stomachs from food more than what is barely necessary, their tongues from irrelevant talks and nonsence and their glances from falling on sinful and useless sights.

Abid Sani said to Abid Yunus:

> O Yunus, some men love prayers. They prefer no other act to prayers, as they form the basic pillars of worship. These men lead life with truth and reliance (on Allah). They are alway occupied with individual Du'a made to the court of Allah, There are some persons who are very fond of fasting and prefer no other act to fasting.

Some among them are those who love charity more than any other deed. I am going to give you some details as to what is meant by Prayer, fasting and charity.

Prayer means that you should be regular in your prayes despite all the pains and distresses that you may be undergoing and you should always be obeying Allah's commands. Fasting means that you should protect yourself from all sorts of vices and disobedience. Sadaqa (charity) means that you should not cause the slightest trouble and distress to anyone as this is the best Sadaqah and the highest act of virtue.

You should know from the foregoing details that it is most important to refrain from prohibitted acts in all walks and activities of life. If you become regular both in what is enjoyed upon and in what is prohibited then you will become safe from sins and acts of disobedience. On the other hand if, instead of attainning this protection from sins, you remain drowned in them, you will get no benefit, even if you spend all your nights in offering optional prayers and fasting and do all the desirable acts of devotion. All your devotion during your waking nights will go waste. This is but natural sins and good deeds do not go together of you are fasting during days but indulging in backbiting and telling lies and commtting other sins, you will gain nothing.

Once Hazrart Abbas (RAA) was asked:

There is a man who is doing many good deeds and is also committing many sins, while there is another man who is doing less good deeds and commtting less sins. Which is the better of the two. He (RAA) replied: Both are equal I have told that it is more important to refrain from what is forbidden than to do what is enojoined upon. This may be illustrated by the example of a patient . He is adminstered some medicine and has also been advised to refrain from some injurious foods. If

the patient follows both these instructions, he will be cured from his disease quickly. If he disobeys both the instructions, he will not get cure. He will be asked to act upon the prohibitions, because there is no gain at all in taking medicine but not minding the prohibitions. On the other hand if the patient follows the prohibitions but does not take the prescribed medicines, he is sure to get relief by the grace of Allah. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

اصل كل داء الحمية

Prevention from Prohibitted things is the basis of cure.

The meaning of this saying of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is that prevention is in itself a permanent treatment, which does away with any other treatment.

That is why it is said about the Indians that they regard prevention from injurious food and other things as an important treatment which procures cure.

The foregoing details show that Taqwa is a very important virtue; it is a means to salvation in the Hereafter. It is the men of Taqwa who are occupying an Exalted position. It is, therefore, necessary for all to inculcate the virtue of Taqwa in them,

وا لله سبحانه ولى التوفيق

SECTION 7

Four limbs of the human body are so important that it is binding on you to safeguard them against evils.

PROTECTION OF THE EYES.

The virtue or vice of all the worldly and religious matters depends on the heart. It is the eyes that is responsible for the deterioration of the heart. That is why Hazrat Ali (RAA) has said.

> If a man does not safeguard his eyes, his heart becomes worthless and vacant which can have no excellence and no light.

PROTECTION OF THE TONGUE

Protection of the tongue is very necessary because on its protection depends the benefit and fruit of all your good deeds worship and devotion and because the tongue most often lays waste all your deeds, worship and devotion. Sometimes an informal talk and backbitings spoil years of your worship and spiritual disciplines. That is why some saints have said:

ما شئٌ احق بطول السجن من اللسان

> There is nothing deserving of prolonged imprisonment than the tongue.

It has been related that one of the seven devotees said to Yunus:

> Those who are engaged in worship with full steadfastness, get this steadfastness on account of the protection of their tongues. The protection of the tongue should, therefore be the most appreciable and foremost duty. This is the only way of saving the heart from the asault of doubts, suspicions and evils.

Only think of the precious moments of your life which you have wasted only in loose talks and gossips. If you had spent these moments in seeking forgiveness, your repentance would have perhaps been accepted and your sins would have been wiped off. If you had rehearsed during these precious moments the Article of Faith لا اله الا الله, you would have deserved untold rewards and recompense. If you had prayed during these moments for peace and security your prayers would have perhaps been granted in some opportune moment and you would have received freedom both from the anxieties of the world and the Hereafte.. Is it therefore not a matter of great loss to spend the precious moments of life in useless and irrelevant gossips?

So utilize this. commodity (time) of life in rehearsing pious words and Allah's sacred names and do not utilize these precious moments in useless activities, so that you may be benefitted in the Hereafter and may be saved on the Day of Judgement from curse and blame and on the plain of Resurrection from the distress of reckoning. Some poet has said so nicely:

اذا ما هممت بالنطق فى الباطل فاجعل مكانه تسبيحاً.

If you want to use your tongue in some false talk do not do so but instead use it is rehearsing the sacred names of Allah.

PROTECTION OF THE STOMACH

It is necessary to protect the stomach because the food we eat is like seed and water for the growth of good deeds. If the seed is bad and there is no watering arrangement the growth of the plants of deeds will also be similar i.e. It is likely that this bad seed may spoil totally your field of cultivation and

render it uncultivable. A renowned saint Hazrat Ma'roof Karkhi (RA) has said:

When you are fasting you must consider with whom you are breaking the fast and with what and whose food. Sometimes a single morsal destroys the state of the heart which is not attained again. Sometimes there are many morsals of food by eating which a man is deprived of the virtue of night vigils. Sometimes a single sinful glance stops a man from the recitation of the Holy Qur'an. Sometimes the eating of a single morsal stops a man from waking up at nights for a full one year.

You have, therefore, to be very cautious about your food, in case you want to reform your heart and get the ability to worship. This is about the purity of the food. It is also necessary to eat this food in a desirable quantity only. I have seen that sometimes excessive eating stands in the way of worship. If you eat your food in an excessive quantity you will become like an ass carrying on its back food. After filling your stomach if you ever succeed in forcing your self to worship, such worship will be devoid of taste and sweetness. That is why some saints have said:

> If you are used to excessive eating, do not aspire for the sweetness of worship. How can light be kindled in the heart without worship or worship devoid of taste and sweetness?

That is why Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) has said that he remained in the company of many saints living on Labanon mountains. Everyone of them advised him that whenever an oppurtunity come the following four points should be advised to those walking on the path of Deen.

1. One who eats one's fill is deprived of the sweetness of worship.

2. A man who sleeps for long hours is deprived of the blessing of longevity.

3. A man who seeks to please the people is deprived of the pleasure of Allah.

4. A man used to useless talks and gossips will be deprived of death on Islam – God forbid.

Hazrat Sahal bin Abdulah Tastri (RA) has said that all good depends on these four points:

(1)Keeping the stomach empty.
(2)Maintaining silence.
(3)Seclusion from the people.
(4)Keeping vigil on nights.

Some saints have said:

الجوع رأس مالنا

Hunger is our capital in trade.

This means that whatever sweetness and enjoyments we receive and whatever knowledge we acquire and practise are all by virtue of our patience with hunger.

Protection Of The Heart

The fourth limb requiring care and protection is the heart, as it is the basis of the entire body. If the heart goes out of order the entire body with all its limbs will go out of order. If the physical as well as spiritual reform of the heart is attained the entire body will get reformed. The heart may be

likened to the roots of a tree and the rest of the body to the branches of that tree. The well-being of the branches depends on the well-being of the roots. If your ears, eyes, stomach, tongue etc. are sound, you may understand that the reform of your heart has taken place. If those limbs are inclined to sins you may understand that there is some disorder and defect in the heart which is a very serious matter indeed. The heart therefore, requires full attention, so that it may be reformed and bring you spiritual peace and tranquillity.

The disease of the heart is connected with the thoughts and the suspicions which lie beyond the control of man and its reform is, therefore, a difficult task. Its reform demands complete wisdom intelligence and alertness. That is why the saints engaged in spiritual disciplines think that it is very difficult to reform the heart. The wise and the clever take special care to reform their hearts. Hazrat Bayazeed Bustani (RA) has said:

عالجت قلبى عشرا ولسانى عشواً ونفسى عشراً فكان قلبى اصعب الثلاثة.

> It took me ten years to reform my heart, my tongue and my self, but the reform of the heart was most difficult of the reform of the three other limbs.

In order to reform the heart it is necessary to refrain from the four weaknesses which have already been mentioned, viz. (1) Prolonged hopes (2) Haste and hurry, (3) Pride and, (4) Jealousy.

I have mentioned here all these four factors, because apart from the general public even the special groups of men and the devout men are involved in these weaknesses. They are therefore, become more heinous. A devout person is

involved in some prolonged hope and is taking it as something well-intended but this prolonged hope found in him throws him into negligence and idleness and stops him from good deeds.

Sometimes he makes haste in trying to reach a higher position, and in case of delay in achieving his objective, his enthusiasm cools down. Sometimes he gets saintly men to pray for him, but he becomes dejected when he does not see signs of acceptance. Sometimes he pronounces curse on someone and feels ashamed for that later on.

Sometimes he begins to be jealous of his collegues in the matter of wealth and property and thus becomes involved in very heinous sins and crimes. That is why Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) has said:

> "I fear danger for my self from the ulama and the devout person, more than from any other group. When the people felt offended at this statement he (RA) said that it was not his own statement, but it was the statement of Hazrat Ibrahim Nakh-'e (RA).

It is narrated from Hazrat Ata bin Ribah (RA) that once Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) said to him:

> Beware of me and the devout persons. It is possible that I may at any time issue a ruling about a pomegranate that it is sweet and another saint issues a ruling that it is sour. This may lead to a quarrel between us ending in a murder.

Hazrat Malik bin Dinar (RA) has said:

I shall accept the evidence of the men of worship about others, but about their own affairs, because they are filled with jealousy against each other.

It is also related that Hazrat Fuzail bin Iyaz (RA) said to his son:

> Purchase a house for me, so that I may live away from those worshippers and showy sufis as I find no benefit from living among such men. If they see some vice in me they openly declare it among the people and if they see some good in me they begin to feel jealous of me.

You might have observed yourself that these discourteous and showy worshippers and sufis are proud and they look down upon others, wear a frowining look on their faces on account of pride, as if they are obliging others by offering two Rak'ats of optional prayer, or they have got entry permits for Paradise. They are labouring under the delusion that the entire world, except themselves, is condemned and wretched. Moreover, despite all these vices they wear the garments of the sufis and the saintly men. Such garments negate pride and haughtiness, but these persons have no sense and no knowledge.

It is narrated that once a man clad in rags called on Hazrat Hasan (RA) who was wearing a decent garment. That man saw with wonder and touched the garment of Hazrat Hasan (RA) again and again. Hazrat Hasan (RA) said to him: Why are you gazing at my garment? Note that my garment is the garment of the in mates of Paradise, while your garment is of the in mates of Hell. I have heard that the in mates of Hell will be mostly clad in garments made of rags:

Thereafter Hazrat Hasan (RA) said:

"These men show piety in the matter of dress but their chests are full of Pride and arrogance. By Allah, people having clean hearts and putting on nice dresses are far better than these rag-clad men.

The following poetry of Hazrat Zunnoon of Egypt expresses the same idea:

تصوف فاز دهى بالصوف جهلا — وبعض الناس يلبسه مجانة
يربك مهانة ويرنك كبرا — وليس الكبر من شكل المهانة
تصوّف كى يُقال له امين — وما معنى تصوفه الأمانة
لم يرد الا له به ولكن — أراد به الطريق الى الخيانة.

These couplets mean:

Some ignorant persons put on the dress of the sufis and look down upon others in their ignorance. There are some who put on the dress of the sufis without any purpose. They appear before others as humble and helpless but look down upon others with Pride and arrogance although, the really humble ones are free from pride. These persons put on the dress of the sufis so that the general public may take them to be trust-worthy and righteous men by adopting the guise of sufis it is not their intention to take the path of righteousness nor do they seek the pleasure of Allah. They really deceive the people and take the path of betrayal.

In short, it is necessary to abstain from the above mentioned four vices and from Pride in particular, as this Pride

is so dangerous an evil that it may take you to the virge of infidelity.

So in this matter do not be unmindful of the tricks and seductions of Satan. It was the vice of Pride that misguided Satan to disobey Allah's command we should seek refuge with Allah and Pray to Him that He may, by His mercy, protect us from all crookedness and errors.

SECTION 8

By due consideration and reflect you shall know that the world is transitory and perishable and it is harmful to be absorbed in it. It is more troublesome distressing and torturous than it is comfortable. It entails with worldly affairs, rendering of accounts on the Day of Judgement and facing painful punishment (on submitting wrong accounts). Man cannot bear these torments and trials. After understanding these aspects you should use the worldly resources to the barest minimum that may be helpful in obeying the Divine commands. You should remain waiting for the eternal favours and bounties of Paradise where nearness to Allah is the greatest of all blessings.

You have also come to know that it is useless to expect fidelity and faithfulness from people who always cause trouble and grief instead of sympathy and cooperation. You should therefore not maintain contacts with the people except to the minimum extent needed. You are advised to take advantage from them in the matter of good deeds, but keep aloof from them in matters that are harmful for your Hereafter. Instead, increase your contact with the Lord of the worlds, Exalted Allah, This entails no harm of any kind at all. Occupy yourself with the worship of that sustainer Lord in which there will be no cause of shame for you. Let His Book, the Holy Qur'an, be your guide and act upon its injunctions with steadfastness.

When you have acted upon these injunctions Allah shall solve your difficulties and help you. He will shower on you His bounties, gifts and honours and assist you in your difficulties in this world and in the Hereafter. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

إحفظ الله تجدهُ حيث اتجهت.

> Remember Allah and you shall find Him wherever you turn.

When you have become aware of the vices of Satan and his enmity with you, seek refuge with Allah that you may get rid of this accursed devil. Do not be neglectful even for a single moment of his treachery. Turn this dog away with Allah's remembrance. Inculcate in yourself the courage, belief and resolve of the men of Allah. If you do this, you shall, God willing, remain safe from the treachery of Satan and you shall suffer no harm. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an.

إِنَّهُ لَيْسَ لَهُ سُلْطَانٌ عَلَى الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا وَعَلٰى رَبِّهِمْ يَتَوَكَّلُوْنَ . (سورة النحل : ٩٩)

> He (Satan) has certainly no power over those who believe and put trust in their Lord. (16:99)

Imam Abu Hazim (RA) has said quite rightly:

"It is the reality of the world. The world that has passed was a dream and the world present before us is passing in obeying the lusts of the self. As for the reality of Satan, his obeying Allah does not benefit Him in any way, nor is it harmful to Him in any way if Satan disobeys Allah.

Exalted Allah will include you among His favoured servents, because:-

You came to know the ignorance of the self and its fondness of deadly things; you reflected on the conduct of this self like the Ulama who are wise and who keep an eye on the final fate; you did not entertain the ignorant who have an eye only on the present and run away from drinking the bitter draught of Taqwa, ignoring the diseases and calamities. You put the rein of Taqwa on your self to protect it from useless and meaningless activities, loose talks, sinful glances excessive eating, diseases like prolonged hopes, ḥastiness, jealousy, Pride, desires and lusts; you indulged only in useful activities.

Exalted Allah, by His grace, protects from the loss of Eeman and from straying, such of His servants as adopt Taqwa and devotion. Exalted Allah Himself becomes responsible to settle all their difficulties. Why should such servants take to useless acts and deeds as are under the care of the Greatest of all Ruler? A saint has said that it is very easy for him to take to the life of Taqwa, because he gives up the use of things about whose lawfulness or unlawfulness he feels a doubt and that his self has become used to obedience and hardships. A poet has described the reality of self in this way:

فالنفس راغبةٌ اذا رغبتها
واذا ترد الى قليل تقنع.

The self becomes inclined to that thing to which you induce it and it becomes contented with only a little if you train it on this line.

Another poet has said:

صبرتُ عن اللّذات حتى تولّت والزمتُ نفسي صبرها فاستمرّت

وما النفس الا حيث يجعلها الفتى　　　فان اطعمت تاقت والا تسلت

I made my self refrain from lusts to such an extent that those lusts disappeared. I imposed patience on the self, till it became used to it. The self follows man's progamme. If you give it sufficient food to eat it is drowned in lusts. If it is given less food, it remains under control.

In short, you will be counted among the abstemious devotees, if you act upon my advice intelligently. Remember that if a man becomes a true Zahid (abstemious person), he becomes adorned with thousands of good qualities. You will now be counted among those servants of Allah who keep themselves aloof from the public, establish relationship of love with Exalted Allah and who are sincere in obedience to Him you shall be counted among people about whom a poet has sung in these words:

تشاغل قومٌ بدنيا هم　　　وقومٌ تخلّوا لَولا هُم
فالزمهم باب مرصاته　　　وعن سائرا الخلق اغناهم
يصفّون بالليل اقدامهم　　　وعين المهيمن ترعاههم
فطُوبٰى لهم ثم طُوبٰى لهم　　　اذا بالتّحيّة حياهم

Some people are engaged in their worldly affairs while there are some people who have spared themselves for the worship and service of their Lord in retirement, Allah has appointed them at the door of His pleasure and made them independent of all the creation. (They are people) whose legs stand at nights in prayer and the Lord Gurdian (Allah) looks after them. So, there are glad tidings for them that Exalted Allah has favoured them with His honours.

When you have fulfilled all the conditions of Taqwa which I have mentioned you will be counted among those favoured servants of Allah. Who launch a Jihad against the self in the path of Allah about whom Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ عِبَادِى لَيْسَ لَكَ عَلَيْهِمْ سُلْطَانٌ (سورة الحجر :٤٢)

> As for my servants you Satan have no authority on them. (15:42)

Your name will be recorded in the register of those men of Taqwa who enjoy the prosperity of both the worlds. You will have a status better than the status of the Angels. (The Angels are free from the vices of the self and lusts and as such, they have no credit for their piety).

When you have acted upon my advice you will have crossed successfully also this third most difficult valley and will have come nearer to your goal, by the grace of Allah. Who is the solver of all problems and difficulties. May Allah by His mercy, protect us all. It is He Who solves all problems. Help should be sought from Him in all difficulties and distresses. Allah Alone is the creator, having power over all things. He is Omnipotent, Omniscient.

I have now described all the important topics of the Third Chapter.

لاحول ولا قوّة الا با لله العلّى العظيم

Chapter Four

THE VALLEY OF OBSTACLES

It is necessary for the traveller on the path of Deen to avoid those abstacles which stand in the way of reaching goal. As already mentioned they are four in number.

THE FIRST OBSTACLE - SUSTENANCE AND DEMAND OF THE SELF, SUSTENANCE ITS REMEDY LIES IN TRUST (IN ALLAH).

In order to steer clear of the obstacle of sustenance you must put your trust in Allah. There are two reasons for Trusts (توکل).

1. You may remain free to indulge fully in prayers and righteous acts. A man who does not have his trust in Allah will be occupied with the search of sustenance both in body as well as in mind. So far as the body is concerned the man will be labouring whole day long to

earn his living. As regards the mind, he will be thinking about ways and means to earn his living and strange doubts, suspicions and ideas will be torturing his mind.

It is necessary for doing full justice to worship and devotion that the body, mind and the heart remain undisturbed and fully concentrated on worship. This quality of concentration is available only to those who have the wealth of trust in them. There are men weak in their belief who can have no peace and tranquillity unless they get some wealth. They are devoid of the zeal to reach the real goal of the Hereafter. I have heard many times from my Shaikh (RA):

1. Only two men achieve success in the world one who is bold and courageous and the other who has trust in Allah.

I consider it a very comprehensive word. A bold and courageous man is able with his courage and amibition to do everything which he intends to do, despite all the obstacles and hurdles that come in his path. As regards the man having trust, he achieves success, because he has full trust in the truth of Allah's promises. He does not fear any man in working for the realization of his "intention". Even the whisperings of Satan do not stand in his way.

On the other hand the man weak in his heart and belief remains wavering in his trust in Allah; his mind always remains distrubed. Like an ass or a bird in a cage he remains waiting for his liberty. His entire life passes in this way without doing any commendable and memorable work. He fails in his schemes and resolutions.

Even the kings and the Rulers have to fight battles to gain power and authority and sometimes they put at stake

every thing to achieve victory. Success and victory demands great courage and sacrifice.

It occurs in the narratives that in the battle of Siffen when Hazrat Amir Muaviyah (RAA) saw his own army and the army of Hazrat Ali (RAA) arrayed against each other: he (RAA) said:

A man intending to perform great deeds has to face formidable difficulties and hardships.

Businessmen and traders undertake hazardous sea and land journeys in all directions keep their hearts prepared to bear loss or gains with courage. Only then they are able to earn high profits and position.

There is another group of ordinary shop keepers devoid of ambition and courage. They are weak hearted men who have no courage to undertake long and dangerous journeys. They have small working capital which they guard carefully. Their movement is confined between their homes and their shops. They are satisfied with a few Dirhams which they earn from morning till evening. They are satisfied with scanty gains; they have no foresight nor right thinking. This is the condition of the worldly wise men.

On the other hand those pious men whose only aim is salvation in the Hereafter, they carry on the business of the Hereafter with the trading capital of trust in Allah.

After having attained the attribute of trust in Allah they begin to work on the path of Deen with patience and perseverance. They make themselves free from all worldly affairs except worship. Leaving the populated areas they retire to forlorn deserted areas of forests and mountains and other

dangerous tracts. On account of their courage and resolve every thing becomes easy for them.

It is these men who form the foundation of Deen, respected and honoured by all and deserving to become the King of Allah's lands. They can go and stay wherever they desire to go and stay. They cross the most arduous valleys of knowledge and practice. Nothing can stop their progress.

The vastness of the earth has no meaning for them. The past, the present and the future are the same for them. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has referred to the same point in the following Hadith:

مَن سرّهٗ أن يكون أقوى الناس فليتوكّل علـى الله ومَـن سـرّهٗ أن يكـون أكرم النّاس فليتّق الله ومَن سره ان يكون اغنى النّاس فليكن بما فـى يـد الله اوثق بما فى يدهٖ -

A man who is pleased to become the strongest of all men, should put his trust in Allah. He who is pleased to become most honoured among the people should adopt Taqwa (Righteousness). He who is pleased to become the richest of the people, should place more reliance on what is in the hand of Allah than what he has in his own hands.

Hazrat Sulaiman al-Khawas (RA) has said that if anyone places his full trust in Allah with sincerity, all the rulers, the princes the rich and the poor will become needy towards him, while he will have no need of these. This is because his master, Allah is the Owner of all that is in the earth and in the heavens.

Hazrat Ibrahim al-Khawas (RA) has been a saint belonging to an spiratual order. He has said: Once I saw a

handsome young man. I asked him what was his destination. He replied: It was Makkah Mukarramah I said: You are going to Makkah without any provisions for the journey and without a riding animal. He replied, saying: O coward man with a weak belief! Does that Being (Allah) who is the Owner and protector of all the seven earths and the heavens not possess the power to take me to Makkah without provisions for the journey?

Hazrat Ibrahim (RA) has said that when he reached sacred makkah, he saw him circumambulating the House of Allah and heard him reciting this conplet:

يا نفس سيحى ابدا ولا تحّى احدا
الا الجليل الصمدا، يا نفس موتى كبداً

"O my self, remain touring always and do not love anyone except glorious and want-less Allah. If you have to die then die on (the belief in) the Hereafter seeing me he said: O Shaikh are you still suffering from weak belief?

Hazrat Abu Mutee (RA) said to Hazrat Hatim Asam (RA) : I have come to know that you wonder about in these dangerous forests without any worldly resourcess except with full trust in Allah. He said: My resources for the journey consist of the following four things:

1. Belief that the world and the Hereafter belong to Exalted Allah.

2. Belief that all the creation is subordinate and subservent to Allah's command.

3. Belief that sustenance and all means and resources lie in the power of Allah!

4. Belief that it is Allah's command that is enforeceable in the universe.

How beautifully some poet has sung.

اری الزهادفی روح وراحة قلوبهم عن الدنیا مراحةً
اذا ابصرت أبصرت قوما ملوك الارض سیتنهم سماحة"

I see the group of the pious in ease and comfort and that their hearts are disgusted with the world. On seeing them I find a community who are the Kings of the earth and generosity is their mark of identity.

2. There is a great loss of Deen in not putting trust in Allah. It is a way of disobeying Allah's command. Exalted Allah arranged for men their sustenance at the time of their creation. Allah has, thus, said in the Holy Qur'an:

خَلَقَكُمْ ثُمَّ رَزَقَكُمْ (سورة الروم : ٤٠)

(Allah) created you then provided your sustenance. (30:40)

It also appears from this verse that not only did that Exalted Allah, creator, and sustainer, make an announcement about, providing sustenance but He also promised for it.

إِنَّ اللهَ هُوَ الرَّزَّاقُ ذُو الْقُوَّةِ الْمَتِيْنُ (سورة الذٰريت : ٥٨)

Surely, Allah He it is that gives sustenance, the Lord of solid power. (51:58)

Then not only did He only promise to provide sustenance but He also took upon Himself the responsibility for providing this sustenance.

وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِى الْاَرْضِ اِلَّا عَلَى اللّٰهِ رِزْقُهَا وَيَعْلَمُ مُسْتَقَرَّهَا وَمُسْتَوْدَعَهَا ط (سورة هود: ٦)

And there is not a beast in the earth, but the sustenance there of depends on Allah. He knows its habitation and its repositary. (11:6)

وَفِى السَّمَآءِ رِزْقُكُمْ وَمَا تُوْعَدُوْنَ فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَآءِ وَالْاَرْضِ اِنَّهٗ لَحَقٌّ مِّثْلَ مَا اَنَّكُمْ تَنْطِقُوْنَ (سورة الذريت: ٢٢-٢٣)

And in the heavens is your sustenance and that which you are promised. By the Lord of the heavens and the earth, if is the truth even as (it is true) that you speak. (51:22-23)

After having thus confirmed the oath, Allah has commanded for putting trust in Him.

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِىْ لَايَمُوْتُ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِهٖ (سورة الفرقان : ٥٨)

"And trust you in the Living one who does not die and sing His Praise. (25:58)

At another place Allah has said:

وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوْا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ (سورة المائدة : ٢٣)

So put your trust in Allah, if you are indeed believers. (5:23)

How mean and wretched a man is who does not consider Allah's promise to be sufficient puts no faith in His word, dSoes not agree to His guarantee and takes no heed of His promises, warnings and commands. This is a very serious lapse of which the general public is totally unmindful.

Once the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said to Hazrat Abdullah bin Umar (RAA):

كَيف انت اذ لقيت بين قومٍ يخبؤن رزق سنتهم لضعف اليقين ؕ

> "O Ibn Umar, what will be your condition when you come upon a community who store their one year's provision and resources for lack of reliance and trust (in Allah)?

Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) has said: Allah's curse be on a community who have no touth in the oaths of Allah. This is because at the time of revelation of the words فَوَرَبِّ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ (By the Lord of the heavens and the earth) the angels prayed for the destruction of men, because they displeased Allah, until He had to take oath about providing sustenance.

Hazrat Owais Qarni (RA) has said:

> Allah shall not accept your worship and devotion even if they are equal to those put in by the people of the earth and the heavens, unless you testify to Allah. He was asked what this "testifying" meant. He (RA) said: Put faith in Allah's guarantee to provide your sustenance, be convinced of it and then spare yourself for His worship.

When Haram bin Habban (RA) met Hazrat Owais Qarni (RA), the former asked the latter where he should reside. Hazrat Owais Qarni (RA) pointed to Syria. Hazrat Haram bin Habban (RA) inquired how he would meet his expenses in Syria. Hazrat Owais Qarni (RA) said: It is a matter of regret for those who fall into doubts. They cannot benefit from advice.

It is related that a thief of shrouds repented from his sin at the hands of Hazrat Bayazid Bustani (RA). When the Shaikh asked the thief about the graves he said: I stole about 12000 shrouds from the graves but I found only two male faces facing the Qiblah. Hazrat Bayazid Bustani (RA) said that the faces of those had been turned from the Qiblah who had no reliance on Exalted Allah in the matter of their livelihood.

An acquaintance of mine told me that he happened to meet some pious man and inquired after his well-being. He replied, saying: They are safe and sound who are men of true belief and they are those who put their trust in Allah.

May Exalted Allah improve and reform, by His mercy, the affairs of all of us, forgive us our sins and deal with us with mercy and sympathy on the Day of Resurrection as becomes His glory and greatness.

THE REALITY OF TAWAKKUL

(TRUST IN ALLAH)

A question may arise about TAWAKKUL as to what is its reality, the injunctions concerning it and its limits concerning sustenance and livelihood.

THE MEANING OF TAWAKKUL

The subject of Tawakkul includes these four items:

1. Its meaning.
2. Place and occasion of Tawakkul.
3. Definition of Tawakkul.
4. How to inculcate the quality of Tawakkul:

1. **Meaning:** the word توکل is an Arabic word which means one who depends on some other person for his needs and

affairs. The man relied upon and trusted in (وكيل) solves all the problems of the needy person.

THE STATIONS OF TAWAKKUL

The word TAWAKKUL is used in three places viz.

1. Divine Decree: This means that man should have full faith in and be satisfied with, whatever Exalted Allah has ordained for him. As this Divine Decree cannot be altered, it is necessary to accept it and be satisfied with it. This is the injunction of the Sharee'ah

2. The other meaning of the word is Nusrat (assistance). This means that man should fully rely of Allah's trust and His assistance. When you render assistance in the propagation and service of Allah's Deen, Allah will also come to your assistance. It occurs in the Holy Qur'an.

فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللهِ (سورة ال عمران: ١٥٩)

When you have firmly resolved (on something), then put trust in Allah (for its completion). (3:159)

At another place Exalted Allah has said:

إِنْ تَنْصُرُوا اللهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ (سورة محمد : ٧)

If you help Allah (in Deen), He shall help you. (47:7)

At another place He has said:

وَكَانَ حَقًّا عَلَيْنَا نَصْرُ الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ (سورة الروم : ٤٧)

It is incombent upon us to help the believers. (30:47)

It is, therefore, necessary to put trust in Allah for the sake of His assistance.

(3) The third place where trust must be placed in Allah is concerned with the earning of livelihood and the daily necessaries of life, because Exalted Allah is Himself the guarantor and surety for the maintenance and protection of your body along with its faculties. so that you may have the necessary strength for worship and devotion Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ (سورة الطلاق: ٣)

And whosoever puts his trust in Allah He will be sufficient for him. (65:3)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said :

لَوْ تَوَكَّلْتُمْ عَلَى اللهِ حَقَّ تَوَكُّلِهٖ رَزَقَكُمْ كَمَا يُرزقُ الطَّيْرُ تَغْدُو خماصاً وتروح بطاناً.

If you put trust in Allah in the true sense, Allah shall grant you sustenance as He provides sustenance for the birds. They leave their nests in the morning hungry and thirsty but come back in the evening to their resting places fully satisfied.

It is also necessary to rely on Allah rationally and from the Shara'ee point of view in the matter of sustenance and livelihood. When the sufis use the word Tawakkul, they mean thereby Tawakkul (trust in Allah) in the matter of sustenance. I am also discussing here the same meaning. In order to furnish

a complete exposition Tawakkul in the matter of sustenance, it is necessary to explain the various, types of sustenance and livelihood. Now, note that there are four types of sustenance:

(1)رزق مضمون (Guaranteed sustenance)
(2)رزق مقسوم (Ordained sustenance)
(3)رزق مملوك (Owned sustenance)
(4)رزق موعود (Promised sustenance)

1. By رزق مضمون (Guaranteed sustenance) are intended those articles of food which are indispensable for men to keep body and soul together. This type of sustenance has nothing to do with other resources of the world. It is an essential duty (واجب) both from the rational and Shara'ee points of view, to place reliance on "Guaranteed sustenance". When Exalted Allah has entrusted to us the duty of His worship He must guarantee the well-being and health of our bodies with which we worship Allah.

Some Karamiya Shaikhs have discussed this topic in the light of their school of thought. The gist of their discussion is that Exalted Allah has guaranteed the sustenance of the creation for three reasons:

(i) We are slaves of Exalted Allah and He is our Master. The Master is responsible for providing sustenance for His slaves, as the slaves are responsible for serving and obeying their Master.

(ii) Exalted Allah has made the creatures needy of sustenance, but has not appointed any definite ways for searching for their sustenance. As such, it is necessary that Exalted Allah should take the responsibility for sustenance as He has very kindly taken the responsibility to provide for His creatures their sustenance and other necessaries of life.

(iii) Exalted Allah has commanded His servants to obey and worship Him and because of this engagement, the servants do not get sufficient time to earn their livelihood. This aspect also makes it incumbent upon Merciful Allah to guarantee livelihood for His creatures that they may devote themselves to Allah's worship with full concentration.

This is what the Karamiya Shaikhs maintain, but this is an entirely wrong and misleading stand, that it is binding on Exalted Allah to provide sustenance to His servants. This stand is based on an ignorance of the sublimity greatness and Omnipotence of Allah I have seen in the books of theology well-considered and well-contested contradictions and rejections of this stand.

You have read some details about رزق مضمون (guaranteed sustenance) which is one of the types of sustenance I have mentioned.

2. The second type is رزق مقسوم (Ordained sustenance). This is the sustenance which Exalted Allah has ordained for his servants and has also recorded it in the preserved Tablet (لوح محفوظ) with full details. The quantity and time of this sustenance are fixed which admit of no alteration, whatsoever. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

الرزق مقسومٌ مفروغٌ منه ليس تقوى تقيٍّ بزائده ولا فجورُ فاجرٍ بناقصه .

Man's sustenance has already been distributed and ordained and the decree is final and unalterable. Now no Taqwa of a righteous man

nor the sins and vices of a sinner can increase or decrease it.

3. The third type of sustenance is رزق مملوك (owned sustenance). It is that type of sustenance which a servant of Allah owns and which is in his custody. This has been indicated in a verse of the Holy Qur'an.

وَاَنْفِقُوْا مِمَّا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ (سورة البقرة : ٢٥٤)

And spend (in the path of Allah) from what I have given you. (2:254)

Here مما رزقناكم means مما ملكناكم that of which I made you an owner.

4. The fourth and the last type of sustenance is رزق موعود (Promised sustenance) This is the sustenance which Exalted Allah has promised to the men of Taqwa which these men will get without any effort and exertion to earn it.

There is a verse in the Holy Qur'an, indicating this point:

وَمَنْ يَتَّقِ اللهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهُ مَخْرَجًا وَّيَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ ط (سورة الطلاق : ٢-٣)

Whosoever is God-fearing Allah shall appoint (for him) a way out for him. And (Allah) will provide sustenance for him from (a quarter) whence he has no expectation. (65:2-3)

Putting trust in Allah is an essential duty (واجب) in رزق مضمون (guaranteed sustenance) which is one of the four types of sustenance already mentioned.

DEFINITION OF TAWAKKUL

(TRUST IN ALLAH)

Ahl-e-Tariqat (the sufis) have defined Tawakkul differently. According to some Tawakkul means putting Trust in Allah and severing all hopes from His creatures. To some Tawakkul is detaching the heart from everything other than Allah and entrusting it to the protection and care of Allah.

Imam Abu Umar (RA) has said that it is Tawakkul to cut off the heart from everything other than Allah. By "cutting off" the Shaikh means that the bodily pains and distresses should not be disclosed to anyone other than Allah.

My Shaikh (RA) has said that it is Tawakkul to disclose one's troubles and hardships to Allah and disclosing them to anyone other than Allah is called Tawakkul (Trust) on what is other than Allah.

I sum up the various opinions of the Shaikhs as follows:

The servant of Allah should have an unflinching belief which he should fix in his heart to the effect that the remedy for all his troubles, the maintenance of his body and soul, the flufilment of his needs etc. lie only in the power of the Creator of the universe and none else, nor are all these problems related with the material resources of the world. If Allah so wills He can appoint some man or some other worldly means for the fulfilment of these needs or may have these needs fulfilled without any apparent means or any human assistance. Allah does not stand in need of any material means or apparent agents to realize His will.

When you attain this belief and certainty which firmly settles in your heart and you become disgusted with the

worldly causes and human resources, you may think that you have achieved the quality of Tawakkul and you are among those who adopt Tawakkul.

How To Acquire The Quality Of Tawakkul?

It is necessary for this purpose to believe that Exalted Allah is responsible to provide sustenance for His creatures and that Allah is All-Knowing and All-Seeing, having absolute power over all things. He does not break His promise. He is Free from all defects, shortages and weakness when this belief remains settled in your heart you will have acquired the virtue of Tawakkul on Exalted Allah about sustenance.

A question now arises if it is necessary for a servant of Allah to earn his sustenance and livelihood. The reply to this question is as follows:

It is beyond a man's capacity to search for رزق مضمون (guaranteed sustenance), because this category of sustenance is needed for the growth and development of the body. These fall within the jurisdiction of Allah's power as are in His power the acts of giving life and causing death. It is also quite clear that a servant cannot inculcate in him divine attributes.

It is also not necessary for a man to search for "Ordained sustenance", because man stands in need of "guaranteed sustenance) which Allah has guaranteed and the Quranic words وَابْتَغُوا مِنْ فَضْلِ اللهِ (And seek Allah's bounty) do not mean seeking sustenance but they mean seeking reward. The "guaranteed sustenance" being related to resources and means, one may ask if it is necessary to search for these resources and means. The answer to this question is that it is not at all necessary to search for these resources and means, because Exalted Allah is providing sustenance without any means or sustenance associated with some means. Exalted Allah has

taken upon Himself the responsibility of providing sustenance, without imposing any condition on His servant to search for resources and means. He has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَا مِنْ دَآبَّةٍ فِى الْأَرْضِ اِلَّا عَلَى اللّٰهِ رِزْقُهَا . (سورة هود:٦)

"And there is not a single beast in the earth but its sustenance depends on Allah. (11:6)

There is also another question. How can man search for his sustenance from a place not known to him? None can say with any certainty that the means taken for seeking sustenance will be fruitful or that the sustenance sought will be fit and beneficial for the man. No one knows with any certainty the source from which will come his sustenance. For this purpose and for the peace of his mind man should think of the Prophet and messengers of Allah and His saints who relied on Allah in the matter of their sustenance and did little to earn it. They devoted themselves whole-heartedly to the worship of Allah. It is also an agreed fact that by giving up their search for sustenance they did not disobey Allah. This makes it quite clear that it is not necessary to go about in search of sustenance.

Here another question arises. Does the act of searching for sustenance cause an increase in it and giving up this search leads to a decrease in it?

The answer to this question is that Allah has recorded in the Tablet Preserved the quantity and time of the sustenance of every man. No change is possible in this on account of Allah's command.

It is also not possible that there should be any change in the distribution of this sustenance. This is the opinion of the entire group of the scholars of Ahl-e-Sunnah.

The followers of Hazrat Asim Asam (RA) and Hazrat Shafiq (RA) hold a different opinion. They maintain that there is no change in the quantity of the sustenance earned but money and property can increase or decrease through the process of earning sustenance. However, this opinion is not correct. There can be change neither in the sustenance nor in the amount of money and property. There is an indication about this in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an.

لِكَيْلَا تَأْسَوْا عَلَىٰ مَا فَاتَكُمْ وَلَا تَفْرَحُوا بِمَا آتَاكُمْ . (سورة الحديد:٢٣)

That you may not grieve for the sake of that which has escaped you, nor yet exult, because of that which you have been given. (57:23)

If sustenance is increased by the process of its earning or is decreased by the giving of that process, this is a natural cause for satisfaction or grief. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) once said to a beggar:

هاك لو لم تأتها لاتتك

Beware! You could get your ordained share of sustenance whether you searched for it or did not search.

An objection may bswithout any condition. There is an unconditional command in the Holy Qur'an about sustenance.

وَمَا مِنْ دَابَّةٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِلَّا عَلَى اللهِ رِزْقُهَا (سورة هود : ٦)

And there is not a single beast in the earth but its sustenance depends on Allah. (11:6)

About death also the Holy Qur'an contains a definite command:

فَإِذَا جَآءَ أَجَلُهُمْ لَا يَسْتَأْخِرُوْنَ سَاعَةً وَّلَا يَسْتَقْدِمُوْنَ . (سورة النحل: ٦١)

And when their term comes, they cannot put (it) off by an hour, nor (yet) advance it. (16:61)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

اربعة قد فرغ منهنّ الخَلق، والخُلق والرّزق و الأجل .

There are four things which Allah has finally ordained viz. Man's creation, man's character, man's sustenance and his death.

As for Allah's command about punishment and reward, it has been recorded in the Tablet Preserved and has been conditioned with man's actions. This means that if a man does good deeds he will be entitled to reward and recompense, but if he commits sins and does bad deeds he will deserve divine punishment. It is written in the Holy Qur'an:

وَلَوْ اَنَّ اَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ اٰمَنُوْا وَاتَّقَوْا لَكَفَّرْنَا عَنْهُمْ سَيِّاٰتِهِمْ وَلَاَدْخَلْنٰهُمْ جَنّٰتِ النَّعِيْمِ. (سورة المائدة: ٦٥)

If only the people of the scripture would believe and take to Taqwa, We should surely remit their sins from them and would surely admit them into the Gardens of Delight (Paradise).

How someone may say: I have seen that those who work hard for earning their sustenance become rich and well-off, but those who sit idle remain poor and needy.

The answer to this is that there are many people who work hard to earn their sustenance, yet they remain poor and destitute. At times it is seen that there are people who remain

idle and do nothing for earning their livelihood, yet they are rich and well-off. The fact, however, remains that those who work to earn their sustenance do not generally remain poor and destitute, but those who remain idle and do nothing generally remain poor and needy. That is how the Divine Decree is working in the universe.

A preacher Hazrat Abu Bakr Muhammed bin Sabiq Saqli (RA) has said something very wise.

وَكم من قويٍّ فى تقلُّبهٖ مهذب الرائى عنه الرزق منحرفُ
وكم من ضعيفٍ فى تقلّبه كأَنه من خليجٍ البحر يغترفُ
هذا دليل على ان الإله لهُ فى الخلق سرٌّ خفىٌّ ليس بيكشفُ

These conplets mean:

How many strong, courageous and wise man there are who remain poor! And how many weak, inactive and simple men there are who bring out handfuls of gems from the bottom of the seas. This is a proof that in the matter of sustenance Exalted Allah has some scheme for the people which human intelligence is unable to understand.

Someone may ask this question: Is it right or wrong for a man to undertake a journey in the deserts and forests without taking with him food, etc. for the journey?

The answer to this question is as follows:

If you have firm faith in the promises of Allah and have acquired full Tawakkul it is right for you to make a journey without taking with you the necessary provisions for he journey. On the other hand, if you are not quite firm and

steadfast in the attribute of Tawakkul, it is not right for you to undertake your journey without the necessary provisions for it.

I have heard Imam Abul-Ma'ali (RA) saying:

If anyone deals with Exalted allah in the same way as he deals with the people, Allah also deals with him in the same way as the people deal with him.

This is all right, but what is the answer if someone refers to the following word of Allah:

وَتَزَوَّدُوْا فَإِنَّ خَيْرَ الزَّادِ التَّقْوٰى (سورة البقره : ١٩٧)

> So make provision for yourselves, and the best provision is Taqwa. (2:197)

So this verse advises that it is right to take provisions on journeys.

There are two opinions of the Ulama about the meaning of this verse.

1. The word زاد (provision) used in this verse means provision for the journey of the Hereafter so the word زاد does not refer to material provisions.

2. During the time of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) many Hajj pilgrims did not take any provision with them and begged others for help during the entire journey. The command contained in the verse refers to such beggars as became burdens on other pilgrims. The Hajj pilgrimage in the true sense is that which is performed with one's own resources and earnings.

One may put this question: Should a Mutawakkil (who has trust in Allah) take provisions with him for the journey?

The reply is in the affirmative with the reservation that he does not place his whole and sole trust in this provision. He has his complete trust in Allah and he believes that his sustenance has already been ordained. Now it is upto Exalted Allah to help him with the provision he has taken with him or He has power to help him on the journey with other resources. Sometimes a Mutawakkil takes with him provisions with the intention of helping with them other pilgrims.

Whether to take provisions on a journey or to go without provision depends on the condition of the heart. Even if you have with you provisions for the journey, you must have a firm faith in your heart that Exalted Allah shall provide you with the necessary provisions and He alone is your Helper and Guarantor. There are many persons who undertake journeys with necessary provisions but they trust in Allah and not in their provisions. On the other hand, there are persons who undertake journeys without taking with them provisions, but in the core of their hearts they are always thinking of material provisions and have no trust in Allah. Thus, the entire matter rests on the condition of the heart.

Someone may object to what has been said above that neither the Holy Prophet , nor the noble companions (RAA) nor the past righteous men went on journeys without taking provisions with them.

You should note carefully that I have not said that it is unlawful to put your whole and sole trust in your provisions instead of trusting in Allah's help. Consider how Exalted Allah is commanding the Holy Prophet to have trust in Him:

وَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى الْحَيِّ الَّذِي لَا يَمُوتُ (سورة الفرقان: ٥٨)

And trust you (O Prophet) in the living one who shall not die. (25:58)

Did the Holy Prophet (PBUH) disobey Exalted Allah in taking with him (PBUH) during his journeys food water and Dirhams etc.?

No not indeed He (PBUH) never committed disobedience. Despite these resources including Dirhams and Dinars, his (PBUH) entire trust was in Exalted Allah in compliance with the command contained in the verse. In this universe he (PBUH) is the only personality who never turned his eyes to the worldly resources, not even to the treasures of the world the keys to which had been placed in his hands. If the Holy Prophet (PBUH) or other saints of Allah took some provisions with them during their journeys this was only to help others. This was not because they themselves depended on these provisons instead of depending on Exalted Allah God forbid.

Now it becomes quite clear that the entire issue depends on the conditon and the intention of the heart. This is worth noting carefully.

There is another question. Is it better to take provisions during a journey or to proceed on the journey without provisions ? This matter depends on the situation and the person concerned. If some religious leader takes with him provisions on proceeding on ajourney to teach the people that it is lawful and permissible to do so or the intention may be to help with these some needy and poor men and the like then it is an excellent act to have provisions and money etc., during the journey.

However, if a man is going on a journey alone having full trust in Allah and feels that carrying provisions may be a source of disturbance to him in the remembrance of Allah, it is necessary for him to proceed on the journey without any

provisions. Try to understand this slight difference between the two situations.

THE SECOND OBSTACLE-DOUBTS AND SUSPICIONS

TAFWEEZ (ENTRUSTMENT)

The best way of safety from these doubts and suspicions is to entrust all your affairs totally to Allah. In the terminology of "Sulook" it is called Tafweez. There are two reasons for this:

1. Having entrusted all your affairs to Exalted Allah your heart will become peaceufl and tranquil , or else you will feel worried about the good or bad results of your affairs about which you are in the dark. By entrusting these affairs to the care of Allah, you may get the desired results in addition to peace of mind and satisfaction. My Shaikh often used to say in his sittings:

Entrust all your schemes and programmes to your creator. This will bring you comfort and ease. We remain in dark about the outcome of our affairs. We consider something good but it turns out to be bad and vice versa. So if you embark upon any plan trusting in your own schemes and intentions you may have to face failure, even without realizing the loss.

It is related about a saint that he requested Exalted Allah from time to time to show him Iblis. Exalted Allah asked him to give up this desire and request for peace and tranquillity. The saint insisted on his request. At last Allah showed him the face of accursed Iblis. The saint wanted to beat Iblis. At this Iblis said to the saint: I would have killed you just now, if you had not been 100 years old. This put the saint in a fit of pride. He decided to commit sins, as he had many

years to live. He could take to repentance sometime later. He engaged himself in sins and vices and died in the same condition without repentance.

This event contains a warning that we should not insist on our own intentions nor on the completion of our desires (whatever they may be). This also contains a warning against entertaining prolonged hopes. Some poet has said:

وايّاك والمطامع والأمانى فكم أمنية جلبت مُنية

Beware of long ambitions and desires, How many desires there are that death snatches away.

If you entrust all your affairs to Exalted Allah and seek from Him all your good wishes and demands, you are God willing sure to attain goodness and success, Exalted Allah has said in the Qur'an in the words of a pious Prophet Hazrat Moosa (AS):

وَأُفَوِّضُ أَمْرِىٓ إِلَى اللهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللهَ بَصِيرٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ۝ فَوَقَاهُ اللهُ سَيِّـَٔاتِ مَا مَكَرُوا۟ ۖ وَحَاقَ بِـَٔالِ فِرْعَوْنَ سُوٓءُ الْعَذَابِ . (سورة المؤمن : ٤٤-٤٥)

I entrust my cause to Allah. Surely, Allah is seeing His servants. So, Allah protected him from the evils of what they plotted, while a dreadful doom encompassed Pharaoh's people. (40:44-45)

Consider, how clearly Exalted Allah has mentioned the grant of success and assistance in their objectives and protection from their enemies when they entrusted their affairs to Allah. Try to understand well this point.

THE MEANING OF TAFWEEZ AND THE RELATED INJUNCTIONS

The issue of Tafweez involves two aspects, viz.

1. Its meaning, definition and its opposites and
2. Its position and the injunctions concerning it.

A man's desires fall in three categories.

1. One category of those desires which are totally vicious about whose viciousness you feel no doubt. They are Hell, its punishment, disbelief, polytheism, Bid'at (Innovation) and sins. These are totally forbidden. The question of their Tafweez does not arise at all.

2. The second category consists of those desires which are established to be good and hightly desirable viz. Paradise, belief, acting upon the Sunnah. Man must intend to get or act upon them. It is not lawful to take resort to Tafweez in such matters because their goodness and benefit are beyond all doubts.

3. The third category consists of those desires about which we do not feel quite sure whether they are good or bad for us. For example, the optional acts (Nawafil) and permissible acts (Mubahat). The injunction of the Sharee'at about them is that we must say ان شاء اللہ (God willing) before commencing them. The intention to do them without ان شاء اللہ is bad and forbidden in the Sharee'ah.

To sum up, it is necessary to take resort to Tafweez in all matters about the fitness or otherwise or about the result of which you are not quite sure. This is the occasion and position of Tafweez.

THE MEANING OF TAFWEEZ

Some Shaikhs have defined Tafweez as under:

هو ترك اختيار ما فيه مخاطرة الى المختار المدبر العالم بمصلحة الخلق لا اله الا هو .

Everything which involves some possible risk or harm should be entrusted to the care of Allah who is the Absolute Settler and Planner of things in the best interest of the creatures and there is no god but He.

This is Tafweez.

Shaikh Abu Muhammad Sanjari has said:

هو ترك اختيارك المخاطرة على المختار ليختار لك ما هو خير لك.

In risky and harmful matters you should entrust your own authority to the Authority (Allah), so that He may choose that which is good for you.

Shaikh Abu Umar (RA) has defined Tafweez as:

هو ترك الطمع والطّمع هو ارادة الشئ المخاطر بالحكم .

Giving up greed and it is greed to intend to do something which is risky and harmful.

I define Tafweez in this way:

ارادة ان يحفظ الله عليك مصالحك فيما لا تأمن فيه الخطر

It is tafweez in which you intend that Allah may protect your interests for you in which you yourself cannot remain safe from the risk.

Opposite to Tafweez is Tama' (Greed) which is of two kinds:

1. طمع رجاء (Greed of Hope). This means intention to do such acts as involve no risk. In case they involve some risk the words ان شاء الله should be pronounced before commencing the act. This طمع رجاء (Greed of Hope) is desirable and virtuous.

Allah the Lord of the world, has used the word in the Holy Qur'an in the same sense:

وَالَّذِىٓ اَطْمَعُ اَنْ يَّغْفِرَلِىْ خَطِيْٓـَٔتِىْ يَوْمَ الدِّيْنِ ۔ (سورة الشعراء : ٨٢)

--- Who, I ardently desire, will forgive me my sins on the Day of Judgement. (26:82)

It occurs in another place in the Holy Qur'an:

اِنَّا نَطْمَعُ اَنْ يَّغْفِرَ لَنَا رَبُّنَا ط (سورة الشعراء : ٥١)

Surely, we ardently desire that our Lord will forgive us our sins....

I am not going to say any thing more about this Greed of Hope.

2. There is another type of طمع (greed) which is not desirable. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said about it:

اِيَّاكُمْ وَا لطَّمع فانه فقرٌ حاضرٌ

Refrain from طمع (greed), because it is ready poverty.

He (PBUH) has also said:

هلاك الدّين وفساده الطّمع وملاكه الورع

طمع (Greed) is the cause of destruction of Deen and safety and protection from it lie in Taqwa.

My Shaikh (RA) has said:

There are two kinds of undesirable طمع (ardent desire) viz. (1) To receive peace and solace from something the profit of which is doubtful and uncertain; to intend to do something which is risky.

It should be noted that طمع (desire or greed) is undesirable when it is contradictory and opposed to Tafweez, as mentioned above.

Those matters the thought of which creates the quality of Tafweez are five in number.

1. Apprehension in all matters and affairs.
2. Apprehansion of some loss and calamity.
3. Apprehension of spoilage and corruption in some act.
4. Inability to protect oneself from dangerous materials.
5. Failure to ward off dangers on account of one's own carelessness and negligence.

By reflecting seriously on these five items a wish will take rise to entrust them to the care of Exalted Allah. No intention should be formed about any of those items without pronouncing ان شاء الله. On the other hand, if one feels quite sure about virtue and goodness contained in them then they may be undertaken without apprehension or hesitation.

Someone may possibly ask: What is that risk which makes Tafweez inevitable? You should know that there are two types of risks.

Firstly, it is the risk about something whether it will be accomplished or not. It is necessary to pronounce ان شاء الله to safeguard oneself from this risk.

Secondly there is a possible risk whether some good or benefit lies in a certain act. Tafweez is necessary to ward off this possible risk.

The respected Imams of Deen put forward various statements in defining a risk. Risk is that in avoiding which there is goodness but in undertaking it there is a possibility of falling into sins and vices. According to this definition, there is no risk involved in Eeman, steadfastness on Eeman and action on Sunnah, as salvation depends on these virtues and does not depend on other activities. It is also quite clear that no sin is involved in adhering to the Sharee'ah with steadfastness. It is, therefore, unavoidable to make a resolve on these three virtues.

My Shaikh (RA) has explained these risks in this way. Risk is that act and that temporary injunction that sometimes is better to carry it out in preference to the original and main injunction.

This definition of risk applies also to فرائض (obligatory duties) Sunnah acts and also permissible acts. For example a man intends to offer prayer when the prescribed time is very short but at the same time he catches fire or falls into a river. It becomes incumbent on him at such critical time to save himself from the impending danger instead of offering the prayer. This, in the light of this definition if the risk includes فرائض (obligatory duties), Sunnah acts and permissible acts, it is

not right to take a finally firm intention for them, it is necessary to pronounce ان شاء الله for them.

One may say that it is not possible that there may be no good in a duty which Exalted Allah imposes on His servant and creatures with punishment for failure to discharge that duty. My Shaikh (RA) has answered this question as follows:

Whatever command Exalted Allah issues to His servant is in the best interest of the servant and has some good for him. Allah does not, however, make His command for some obligatory and essential duty so hard and fast and narrow as not to admit of some flexibility in it. Exalted Allah does place in such prescribed duties some good for His servants.

Sometimes occasions arise to ignore one divine command and obey in its place another command. In such a situation it becomes necessary for the servant to act upon this second command and he will not be taken to task (God willing) for ignoring some essential (واجب) commands, but he will get some reward for this. This reward will however, not be granted for the command ignored but it will be in return for the other command that is obeyed and acted upon.

My Shaikh (RA) has said that there is some good and benefit in all the injunctions which Exalted Allah has prescribed for His servants, e.g., prayer, fasting, Hajj and Zakat, etc. It is not, therefore necessary to pronounce ان شاء الله when intending to carry out any of these. It is necessary only to form a final and firm intention concerning these. My Shaikh (RA) has said that all the Ulama and scholars are unanimous on this opinion. The obligatory (فرائض) and essential (واجبات) duties do not therefore, involve any risk, whatsoever. It is only the permissible and optional duties (مباحات و نوافل) that involve risk and this is a difficult topic of this chapter.

A question arises whether a man becomes safe and sound assuredly from all damages and distresses by entrusting all his affaires to Exalted Allah, notwithstanding that the world is a house of calamities and torments.

The answer to this question is that most probably he becomes secure from all sorts of risks. But in very rare cases just the opposite may happen and in such a situation man becomes disgraced and then he no more remains in the position of Tafweez. This is what Shaikh Abu Amr (RA) has said:

It has also been said by some that, as a result of Tafweez, a man achieves only goodness and virtue in all the affairs entrusted to Allah and remains protected from risks and disgrace. My Shaikh (RA) regards this as the right and desireable view, because what would be the good of Tafweez, if this did not procure a hope of security from destruction and evils?

Another question arises here. Is it incumbent on Exalted Allah to bestow upon the مفوض (Mandator) what is superior and better for him?

The answer to this question is this: It is an agreed opinion that it is impossible that Exalted Allah should be duty –bound towards His servants in any matter. He is absolutely Independent and Unquestionable. However, Allah in His wisdom, ordains something what is better and suitable for His servant, although the servants may not consider this divine dispensation better and suitable for him.

For example, on the night of Ta'rees, Exalted Allah imposed on the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Noble companions (RAA) slumber till the rising of the day. On account of this the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the Noble

Campainions (RAA) missed their Tahajjued and also the Fajr prayers, Now consider that, although prayer is far better than slumber yet Allah imposed on all of them slumber on account of His wisdom.

Likewise, sometimes Exalted Allah ordains for a servant wealth, property and other blessings, even though want and poverty appear to be suitable for him. Similarly, sometimes Exalted Allah ordains for a servant wife and children, even though, remembrance of Allah's names and worship are better for him than his occupation with his family affairs.

(To sum up, Tafweez does not make it indispensable that Exalted Allah should ordain for His servant something that is better and superior, as this is not binding on Allah. But generally Exalted Allah ordains what is better and excellent translator).

Take an example. A qualified and experienced physician precribes for his patient barley – water, but the patient desires to drink sugar – cane juice. The physician does not yield, to the patient's desire because be knows that the cure of the disease lies in the prescribed barley – water.

It is also the objective of the servant of Allah to save himself from destruction and ruin. None desires ruin and destruction for the sake of apparent pomp and show, honour and superiority.

Someone may put this question. Is a مفوض (Mandator) free and independent in his affairs, in spite of his Tafweez?

In the opinion of the Ulama of the Ahl-e-Sunnah-wal-Jama'at the (mandator) does not become helpless, nor does he

lose his authority. He does enjoy his authority and discretion, even after having entrusted his affairs to Allah.

THE THIRD OBSTACLE-DESTINY ITS MANY FORMS

Different forms of destiny come upon man. The only effective way of tackling destiny is that man should yield submissively to the Divine Decree. This is necessary for two reasons. Viz.

1. By surrendering himself to the Divine Decree man gets freedom for worshipping Allah with peace and concentration. The mind and heart of a man who does not accept the Divine Decree remain filled with many doubts and worries as to how thing took this turn and that turn. A heart assailed by so many disturbing thoughts and anxieties cannot find peace and tranquillity for worship and devotion and remembrance of the sacred names of Allah.

   Hazrat Shafiq Baalkhi (RA) has said:

   Sorrow and regret on past event and your plans and anxieties for the future have put an end to the blessings of the circumstances of your life.

2. It attracts Allah's wrath to deny the Divine Decree or to be displeased with it.

It occurs in the narratives that a Prophet of Allah (AS) once complained to Allah some trouble from which he was suffering. He received a revelation, saying: you are making a complaint against Me, although complaining against Me or sensuring Me are below My sublimity. Why are you displeased with My Decree? Do you desire that for your sake I should change the constitutions of the world or alter the Tablet

Preserved or should I ordain for you something which you desire but which I do not desire? Should I bestow upon you something you like but which I dislike? If such a motion ever comes to your mind in the future then I swear by My honour and Glory that I shall strip you of the garment of your Prophethood and thrust you into the Fire without any hesitation.

Now the wise and the intelligent persons should listen attentively and consider that when Exalted Allah is addressing His Prophet (AS) and favourite servant in this tone where do we stand? This threat of Allah is very thought - provoking:

> If such a notion comes to your mind in the future then I swear by My Honour and Glory that I shall strip you of the garment of your Prophethood.

This severe threat is only against a possible notion. What will be the severity of Allah's wrath and displeasure against a servant who cries over his calamities with impatience and expresses complaints and displeasure and calls Almighty Allah along with other beings? This is for the expression of displeasure and complaints only once in life. What will be the fate of one who is expressing complaints to Allah throughout his life?

(It is also notewarthy that) this stern complaint has been addressed to Exalted Allah to express one's grievence. That person will derserve the worst type of punishment who makes some complaint against Allah to some beings other than Allah.

نَعوذ با لله من شُرور انفسنا ومِن سَيّئات اعمالنا

The Meaning Of Acceptance Of Divine Decree Its Reality And Its Injunctions

Accroding to the Ulama رضی (acceptance or approval) means giving up anger and anger means approving something which is contradictory to Allah's judgement and Decree, and about which it cannot be said with any certaintly that it is good or bad. This idea is necessary in the event of displeasure. In the absence of this idea it will not be called anger.

Someone may say that vice and sin also form part of Divine Decree. This means that Exalted Allah is Agreeable to the commission of vices and sins, although this is not the fact at all.

The answer to this objection is that رضی (acceptance or surrender) is concerned with the Divine Decree and with the commission of vices and sins. The Decree on vices or sins is not in itself an order to commit vices and sins. The latter or related only to the Decree and no to Allah's appreciation thereof. Thus there is no رضی (acceptance) with vices a sins.

In the opinion of our Ulama Divine Decree is concerned with four points :

(1) Blessing

(2) Hardship

(3) Virtue

(4) Vice

Blessing: It is essential (واجب) for a man to accept and surrender himself to the Maker of the Decree (i.e. Allah), the Decree and also the object decreed (i.e. the blessing). It is also

essential to mention the blessing received and express gratitude for it.

As for times of hardship and distress it is also essential (واجب) to remain satisfied with and accept the three, i.e. the Maker of the Decree (Allah), the Decree itself and the objects decreed, viz. The hardships and the distress.

As for goodness and virtue; it is essential (واجب) to accept and agree to the three factors and to acknowledge Allah's generous grant of virtue and goodness.

Vice: It is necessary to accept and agree to the above three factors. It is however not lawful to accept and agree to evils and vices arising as a result of this Decree, because they are sins. It is necessary to agree to the Decree of this vice because it is an agreement to the Decree of Allah (and not to the vice decreed).

Take an example. Suppose you are trying to know the reality of a false religion and you agree to this effort. This action of yours will not be regarded as your agreement to the false religion because you do not want to embrace that religion; you are only studying it for the sake of knowledge and information about it. In the same way here also your agreement in the cause of some vice does not mean that you are agreeing to it, because you approve of it. You are agreeing only to the Divine Decree concerning the vice.

One may put this question:

Is it, lawful for a man who agrees to the Divine Decree, to demand increase in some matter?

The answer to this question is that it is quite all right to seek increase in virtue and goodness. It is not a case of going

against the Divine Decree. Seeking increase of some decreed virtue only proves that the man is pleased with Allah's Decree.

It was the habit of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) that whenever milk was offered to Him (PBUH), he (PBUH) spoke these words:

اَللّٰهم بارِكْ لنا فيه وزِدنا منهُ

O Allah! Grant us blessing and increase in this (milk).

When something other than milk was offered to him (PBUH), he (PBUH) would speak these words:

وزدنا خيرا منها

O Allah! Give us more of something better than this.

Now just see that there is nothing on either of these occasions to indicate that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) did not agree to the Divine Decree.

Someone may raise an objection to this, saying: You advised that increase may be sought with the intention of seeking increase in virtue and goodness. It is not narrated about the Holy Prophet (PBUH) that he ever demanded increase in virtue and goodness.

The reply to this objection is that such issues are concerned with the heart. They are felt in the heart but are not expressed with the tongue in words.

THE FOURTH OBSTACLE PERSEVERANCE ON TROUBLES AND HARDSHIPS

This obstacle can be crossed only by taking resort to patience and perseverance. There are two reasons for this.

1. Man's indulgence in worshp and success in reaching his final goal depend exclusively on patience and perseverance, He can never reach his goal who is not patient and steadfast. This is because a man putting in worship in sincerity and seriousness faces difficulties and tortures in this path. Every form of worship and devotion entials troubles and trials. No worship can be done without suppressing the self and subjecting it to severity. The lusts and the self both prevent man from worship and devotion. The most formidable task for a man is to control these two forces.

A man has to be very cautious and careful in doing good deeds. This calls for effort and labour. Hence, the hardships to be faced in accomplishing any task efficiently.

This world is the home of troubles and tortures ad those inhabiting this world have to face these calamities.

For example, there are deaths of members of the family, friends and relatives, their sudden disappearence and separation, one's own infliction with various diseases etc.

Further, being disgraced and insulted at the hands of others, their violation of the honour and respect of wives and children, contemptuous treatment with them casting slur on them and putting on them false blames and charges and loss of wealth and property and so many other insults and degredations. All these have to be endured.

Distresses and calamities of these types fall on men which injure and torture their hearts. All these calamities call for patience and perseverance without which a man cannot discharge his obligations of worship devotion and other important duties.

Apart from this a man aspiring for success and salvation in the Hereafter is put to severe trials and tests. The favourite servants of Allah are put to the hardest troubles and tribulations in this world. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

أشدّ النّاس بلاءً الأنبياء ثمّ الأمْثل فالأمثل

> The Prophet (AS) are subjected to the hardest calamities, then the next in status, then the next and so on.

So whoever takes the path of virtue and righteousness is sure to be entangled in hardships and calamities. If this man does not pull up courage to bear these troubles and tortures with patience, he will not be able to reach his desired goal; he will be left behind in the midway.

Exalted Allah has said in clear words in the Holy Qur'an that He shall put His servants to trials and test by subjecting them to troubles and tortures:

لَتُبْلَوُنَّ فِيْٓ اَمْوَالِكُمْ وَاَنْفُسِكُمْ وَلَتَسْمَعُنَّ مِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اُوْتُوا الْكِتٰبَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَمِنَ الَّذِيْنَ اَشْرَكُوْٓا اَذًى كَثِيْرًا ۭ (سورة ال عمران:١٨٦)

> Surely, you will be tried in your property and in your persons and you will hear much wrong from those who were given the scripture before you, and from the idolaters. (3:186)

Immediately after this Exalted Allah has said:

وَإِنْ تَصْبِرُوْا وَتَتَّقُوْا فَإِنَّ ذٰلِكَ مِنْ عَزْمِ الْأُمُوْرِ . ٭سورة العمران:١٨٦)

But if you persevere and ward off (evil), then that is an act of great resolution. (3:186)

Now just see, how in these verses Exalted Allah has said in clear words that the people should form the habit of tolerating troubles and difficulties with courage and patience. This is bravery and this is the course taken by men of high ambition and resolution.

So, it is indispensation for a man walking on the path of worship to take to high degree of patience and perseverance and to make his self used to hardships and difficulties. He should adhere to steadfastness and patience till the last breath. If he does not do so, he will be like one who aspires to achieve victory in a battle without the use of weapons and engases himself in activities not helpful in the achievement of his goal.

Hazrat Fuzail bin Iyaz (RA) has said: The man walking on the path of the Hereafter should colour himself with the following four colours:

White – Red – Black – Green

1. White – For starvation

2. Black – for eduring taunts, evils and troubles coming to him from the people.

3. Red – For opposing Satan.

4. Green – For facing the vicissitudes of the times with patience and endurance.

The other benefit of patience lies in the fact that on account of it man attains the virtue and goodness of both the

worlds along with success and salvation. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَمَنْ يَّتَّقِ اللّٰهَ يَجْعَلْ لَّهٗ مَخْرَجًا وَّ يَرْزُقْهُ مِنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَحْتَسِبُ . (سورة الطلاق : ٢-٣)

"And whoever fears Allah, He shall appoint for him a way out and will provide for him from (a quarter)where he has no expectation. (65:2-3)

This means that Exalted Allah protects from difficulties those who adopt Taqwa through patience and perseverance.

By virtue of patience a man overpowers his enemies. It occurs in the Holy Qur'an:

فَاصْبِرْ . اِنَّ الْعَاقِبَةَ لِلْمُتَّقِيْنَ . (سورة هود : ٤٩)

Then have patience the best regard is for the God – fearing. (11:49)

Man is able to attain his lawful claims by virtue of patience. Thus, Exalted Allah has said:

وَتَمَّتْ كَلِمَةُ رَبِّكَ الْحُسْنٰى عَلٰى بَنِيْ اِسْرَائِيْلَ بِمَا صَبَرُوْا (سورة الاعراف:١٣٧)

And the fair word of you Lord was fulfilled for the children of Israel, because of their endurance. (7:137)

When Hazrat Yaqub (Prophet Jacob AS) complained to Hazrat Yusuf (Joseph) AS about the pain of separation from Hazrat Yusuf (Joseph) AS, the latter replied in writing:

اِنَّ اٰبَآءَكَ صَبَرُوْا فَظَفِرُوا فَاصْبِر كَمَا صَبَرُوْا تَظْفَرْ كَمَا ظَفِرُوْا.

Your forefather adopted patience and achieved success. So adopt patience as they did and achieve success as they achieved success.

One advantage of taking to patience is that the patient person becomes a leader and guide of the general public. Exalted Allah has said:

وَجَعَلْنَا هُمْ اَئِمَّةً يَّهْدُوْنَ بِاَمْرِنَا بِمَا صَبَرُوْا (سورة السجدة : ٢٤)

."And we made them leaders who guide (the people) by our command, because they took to patience. (32:24)

Another advantage of patience is that man becomes entitled to Allah's appreciation of him. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

اِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِعْمَ الْعَبْدُ اِنَّهٗ اَوَّابٌ (سورة ص : ٤٤)

Certainly we found him patient. How excellent a slave he was! (38:44)

Thus, Exalted Allah grants His mercy and gives the glad tidings of Paradise on account of the quality of patience. He has said in the Holy Qur'an

وَبَشِّرِ الصَّابِرِيْنَ . (سورة البقره : ١٥٥)

And convey glad tidings to the patient. (2:155)

Thereafter Allah has said:

اُولٰئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوٰتٌ مِّنْ رَّبِهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ (سورة البقرة : ١٥٧)

Such are they on whom descend blessings and mercy from their Lord. (2:157)

As a result of this quality of patient man becomes a beloved of Allah as has been said in the Holy Qur'an;

وَاللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِيْنَ (سورة ال عمران:٣)

And Allah loves the patient.

It is the virtue of patience by virtue of which high stations are attained in Paradise. Allah has said:

أُولٰئِكَ يُجْزَوْنَ الْغُرْفَةَ بِمَا صَبَرُوْا وَيُلَقَّوْنَ فِيْهَا تَحِيَّةً وَّسَلَامًا . (سورة الفرقان : ٧٥)

They will be awarded high a chamber (in Paradise) on account of their patience and they will meet therein with welcome and the word of سلام (peace). (25:75)

It is the virtue of patience which earns for the patient hounour and grace from Exalted Allah. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an.

اِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُوْنَ اَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (سورة الزمر : ١٠)

The patient shall indeed be paid their wages without count. (39:10)

Now consider, how Generous and merciful is Allah that He pays His servant so high wages along with grant of excellence for maintaining a little patience in his conduct and behaviour. This shows that the secret of all good and successs in the world as well as in the Hereafter lies in the virtue of patience. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

ما أُعطِيَ احدٌ من عطآءٍ خيرٍ أوسع من الصّبر .

No virtue greater and larger than patience was ever granted to anyone.

Hazrat Farooq Azam (RA) has said:

جميعُ خيرِ المؤمنين فی صبرِ ساعةٍ

In an hour of patience is contained all good and blessings (for the Muslims).

Some poet has very beautifully mentioned the virtues and blessings of patience in the following couplets:

الصبر مفتاح ما يُرجى وكل خير به يكونُ
فاصبر وإن طالت الليالى فربما امكن الحرونُ
وربما رنيل باصطبار ما قيل هيها لايكونُ

Patience is the key to all hopes and wishes, and through patience is possible all welfare. So remain patient and steadfast even if the nights (i.e. the time) get prolonged, as sometimes what seems to be impossible becomes possible. Sometimes success is attained by virtue of patience in difficult problems which are declared to be incapable of being solved.

After having come to know all the virtues and benefits of patience, it is imperative for you to inculcate in yourself the virtue of patience and to try hard to acquire this quality till you become one of those who have succeeded in adorning themselves with this virtue.

واللہ ولیُّ التوفیق

THE REALITY OF PATIENCE AND ITS INJUNCTIONS

The literal meaning of صبر (patience) is to refrain from a restrain. The word صبر has been used in the following verse in this sense:

وَاصْبِرْ نَفْسَكَ مَعَ الَّذِيْنَ يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ بِالْغَدَاةِ وَالْعَشِيِّ يُرِيْدُوْنَ وَجْهَهُ. (سورة الكهف : ٢٨)

Restrain yourself along with those who call their Lord at morning and evening seeking His countenance. (18:28)

The word صابر (one who is patient) is also used for Exalted Allah in that He is not Hasty in punishing people for their disobedience.

Conventionally صبر (patience) stands for a striving of the heart because to restrain the self from جزع (expressing unrest and disorder) is called patience. The Ulama have defined جزع (Jaza) in this way:

ذكرإ ضطرابك فى الشدّة

To express your internal unrest and disorder in time of trouble and hardship.

Some Ulama have said that جزع (Jaza) is that intention of a man whereby he tries to get out of some trouble into which he has fallen, whereas صبر (patience) means the giving up of جزع.

HOW TO ATTAIN THE VIRTUE OF PATIENCE

A man should imagine the critical times of distress and calamities and think that his impatience and restlessness in such a situation will bring neither relief or aggravation in his

suffering nor cause any shifting of the time backward or farward. It is, therefore, useless to give way to restlessness and bewailing. This behaviour may prove harmful rather than beneficial. The best way of attaining the virtue of patience is to remember the promises made by Exalted Allah to reward His servants who practise patience and perseverance.

SECTION 1

In order to indulge in worship with full attention and mental concentration it is necessary for you to cross over all the obstacles and their causes already mentioned. Thereafter you have to cross this difficult valley (of persevarance on Troubles and Hardships) If you get entangled in these obstacles then not only will you fail in your aims but it will also become difficult for you even to remember them. Each of these obstacles has a different type of activity to surround men sooner or later.

The most risky and difficult of all the obstacles is of sustenance and the means to earn it. This presents a very difficult problem for all in which everyone is involved. This is the problem which has made men indifferent to the obligation of worship. It has burdened men with untold anxieties and worries in confronting which entire ages are being wasted.

This is the obstacle which generally opens the road to grievous sins and vices. This deviates men from the path of worship and obedience and takes them to the doors of worldly men. Being involved in the problems of earning their livelihood the people have become neglectful of worshipping Allah and are drowned in the darkness of sins. Thus disgraced and distracted, they are wasting the precious days and nights of their lives. They may be reagrded rich in the world by the people, but they will arrive in the presence of Exalted Allah

destitute and poor. If Allah does not provide them with the cover of His mercy, they are doomed to terrible punishment.

This is notwithstanding the fact that Exalted Allah has revealed so many verses in the Holy Qur'an with promises to provide for them their sustenance. He has guided them rightly by commanding them to adopt Tawakkul (Trust in Allah).

The revered Ulama have also compiled countless books to advise the people about the provision of their sustenance and have warned them in this matter against Allah's censure and punishment. All this has, however, been in vain, because the people are not prepared to take the path of Taqwa nor to pull up courage to depend on the Creator and Sustainer, Allah, in the matter of their sustenance. They have become so senseless that they remain doubtful even about their morning and evening meals.

The basic cause of all this is lack of reflection on the Omnipotence of Allah and His verses, ignoring the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) as well as the advice of the past saints, total absorption in Satanic thoughts and superstitionns etc. They have become fond of the talks of the ignorant and have adopted the ways and the habits of the negligents. They have become weak in the matter of faith and belief.

On the other hand, those people remain pleased with Allah's will in all circumstances whom Allah has granted spiritual insight and whom He has chosen for the service of their Deen. They are men who hold fast to the rope of Allah, having no eye on the worldly people nor on the material resources. They have full faith in the promises and verses of Allah and they keep their eyes fixed on the straight path of Allah. In the matter of their sustenance they never fall victim to satanic whisperings and thoughts nor to the seductions of the self and of the people. They confront these vicious forces

of reduction delusions and superstitions with courage and patience until the agents of these devellish forces, viz. Satan, the rebellious self and the ignorant public disappear. As a result the servant of Allah holds fast to the straight path of Deen with added steadfastness and resolve.

An account of Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) has been related in the context. Once he (RA) decided to undertake a journey through forests without taking with him any provisions and other necessaries of life. Satan tried to deviate him from his decision by reminding the Shaikh of the numerous hazards of the journey without provisions. On this not only did the Shaikh beome more adamant on his decision but he also decided to offer one thousand nafl (optional) prayers after completing every one mile of his journey. He implemented this decision and lived in that forest for twelve years.

When Caliph Haroon Rashid passed by that way while on his Hajj pilgrimage he saw the Shaikh offering optional prayer, on his way. The Caliph was told that it was Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA). The Caliph then asked the Shaikh (RA) what he was feeling in that conditions. In reply the Shaikh recited these couplets:

نرقع دنيانا بتمزيق ديننا فلا ديننا يبقى ولا ما نرقع
فطوبى لعبد اثر الله ربه وجاد بدنياه لما يتوقع

We are enriching and raising our world by destroying our Deen (Thus, we ruin both). Glad tidings are for that servant of Allah who has preferred Allah's pleasure and has sacrificed his hopes for the world for the sake of the Hereafter.

It is related about a saint who was passing through a forest that once Iblis called on him and whispered in his heart that passage through the forest was very risky because of fierce animals and particularly when the saint had no provision with him in that deserted place.

The saint became aware that it was Satan's whispering. Then the saint took a firm decision that he would continue his journey without any provisions and he would eat nothing unless he was forced to eat Ghee and honey. Thereafter he began to roam about in the forest.

While he was roaming in the forest in this way, a caravan passed that way. Seeing this caravan the saint lay down on the ground with his eyes closed, so as to avoid the gaze of the caravan people. However, the caravan approached him. Seeing him in this helpless condition they thought that he had fainted on account of hunger and thirst. To bring him to his senses they decided to pour into his mouth some Ghee and honey. At this time the saint closed his mouth tightly. They opened his mouth with a knife. Then the saint began to laugh. The caravan men thought that the man had gone mad. Realizing this the saint told them that he had not gone mad. He related the whole story about Satan's whispering. They were very much surprised to hear this strange story.

Another saint has related a similar story about him saying:

> Once during my student life I stayed in a mosque far off from the town without having taken with me any provisions. I did so following the way of my elder and senior Shaikhs. Satan whispered in my heart that if I stayed in a mosque near a town it would be easier to arrange for my food etc. At this I took

a firm decision to stay in this far off mosque and would eat nothing other than sweetmeats and that too when it was forced into my mouth.

One day after the Isha prayer I went to bed after closing the door of the mosque when about one third of the night had passed someone with a lamp in hand knocked at the door. When I opened the door I found an old women along with a young boy. The woman entered the mosque and placed before me a plate of sweetmeats. The woman told me that the boy was her son and she had prepared the sweetmeats for him but the boy insisted and swore that he would eat that sweetmeat only with that traveller who was staying in the mosque. Therefore the woman put one morsal of the sweetmeat into my mouth and another into the mouth of her son. I ate that sweetmeat my fill. Then the woman went away with her son and I closed the door after them and a long reflected in my heart on this event.

There are countless events like this describing the spiritual exercises (مجاهدات) of godly and righteous men and Satan's opposition to these spiritual excercises. Three benefits can be obtained from these events.

1. The sustenance decreed by Exalted Allah must reach the person concerned at any rate.

2. People should note that it is very important to adopt Tawakkul (Trust) in the matter of sustenance and that satanic whisperings and conspiracies are also so dangerous and destructive that even the sincere devotees and righteous men could not remain safe. Iblis did not

abstain from his conspiraices to lead them astray despite their continuous and orduous efforts and strifes. They had, therefore to take resort to such strange and exceptional measures to save themselves from these Satanic whispering and seductions.

I swear by Allah that even a man who has devoted seventy years of his life in worship, devotion and spiritual disciplines cannot remain safe from Satanic whisperings and deception. As for those who are totally negligent and careless, they cannot remain safe from the treachery and the misleading suggestions of Satan. If the self and Satan succeed in their treachery even in the least degree, they can play havoc to the veterans of Deen as well as the beginners traversing on the path of Deen.

إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَعِبْرَةً لِأُولِي الْأَبْصَارِ (سورة ال عمران : ١٣)

"Certainly there is a lesson for such as have eyes. (3:13)

3. It appears from the experience and accounts of these saints that the stage of Tawakkul in the matter of sustenance cannot be reached without hard striving and exertions. Although those saints were weaker than we in their body and their bones, yet their hearts were illuminated with the light of Eeman and learning. Their limbs were stout and strong in following Deen. That is why their spiritual exercises and efforts took them to very high position. We should take lessons from their lives and search for cure for our irremediable spiritual diseases.

SECTION 2

According to my experience and knowledge I am mentioning below some important points about Tawakkul regarding sustenance to save you from the tension of the self. Note these points attentively, impress them upon your heart and act upon them. This will, God willing, open before you the path of right guidance.

THE FIRST POINT

It is necessary to have an unshakable belief in the promises made by Exalted Allah in the Holy Qur'an about His responsibility and guarantee for providing sustenance to His creation. Take the following example.

A king of this world whom you believe to be true to his word and honest invites you to dinner at night. Again, there is an ordinary man who may be a Jew, Christian or a Magian also invites you to dinner and apparently he is quite respectable and reliable. In such a situation you will become quite certain and carefree about your night dinner.

It is a matter of regret that on the basis of their apparent conditons and positions you put trust in the words of these persons. But you do not put trust in the words and promises of your Creator and Sustainer Who has taken in clear words the responsibility for providing you sustenance and has guaranteed this. Not only has He mad simple promises but He has also supported His promises with oaths. It is very regretful that you put no faith in these promises and oaths of Glorious Allah. Instead of reflecting upon Allah's eternal dispensation of sustenance your heart has fallen into doubts and suopicion, about your sustenance. Would that you knew the sin and vice of doubting the truth of Allah's promises. Hazrat Ali (RAA) has said:

أتطلب رزق الله من عند غيره — وتصبح من خوف العواقب امنا
وترضى بصراف ولو كان مشركا — ضمينا ولا ترضى بربك ضامنا
كأنك لم تقرا بما فى كتابه — فأصبحت منحول اليقين مباينا

These couplets mean:

You are searching Allah's sustenance from other than Allah. You think that in this way you will become safe from the vicissitudes of the times and misfortunes. You put faith in the guarantee furnished by a banker who is an infidel, but you put no faith in the guarantee furnished by your Lord (about sustenance). It seems that you did not read which is written in Allah's Book (about sustenance) and you have therefore, become weak of faith (in Allah's promises) and forsaken them.

It is very dangerous to forsake Tawakkul (trust) in Allah and entertain doubts and suspicions about His promises about sustenance. Sometimes this may result God forbid in loss of Eeman (belief). That is why Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَعَلَى اللهِ فَتَوَكَّلُوْا اِنْ كُنْتُمْ مُّؤْمِنِيْنَ . (سورة المائدة : ٢٣)

So put your trust in Allah, if you are, indeed believers. (5:23)

In another place He has said:

وَعَلَى اللهِ فَلْيَتَوَكَّلِ الْمُؤْمِنُوْنَ (سورة العمران : ١٢٢)

The believers indeed put their trust in Allah. (3:122)

This one point is sufficient for guidance for a man who is a believer and who has a sympathetic feeling in his heart for Deen.

لا حول ولا قوّة الا با لله العليّ العظيم

THE SECOND POINT

It is proved from the verses of the Holy Qur'an and the Ahadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) that man's sustenance had been allotted and distributed in the very beginning of the creation of the universe. It is necessary for you to have full faith in this Divine Dispensation and that no alteration whatsoever is possible in this dispensation. It is open Kufr (disbelief) to reject this dispensation or to regard any alteration in it as lawful, despite these clear-cut arguments and proofs.

When you have become convinced with certainty that no change and alteration are possible in this dispensation, then what is the use of being so much absorbed in search of this sustenance. After having put faith in the eternally original distribution of sustenance, it is a matter of disgrace in the world and loss in the Hereafter to search for sustenance so desparatey and fretfully. That is why the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

مكتوب على ظهر الحوت والثور رزق فلان بن فلان فلا يزداد الحريص الآجهدا.

It is written on the back of every fish and bullock that it will be the sustenance of such and such persons. As such it is only unnecessary labour for a greedy person to be in search of his sustenance.

My Shaikh (RA) has said:

ان ما قدر لما ضغيك ان يمضغاه فلا يمضغه غيرك فكل رزقك ويحك بالعز ولا تأكل بالذل.

None other than you can chew the sustenance which has been destined to be chewed by you. So eat your sustenance with grace and do not eat it with disgrace.

This point is also sufficient for a wise man.

THE THIRD POINT

My Shaikh (RA) has this point from some of his teachers:

What has brought me peace and solace in the matter of sustenance is that it is for the living and not for the dead. The dead have nothing to do with eating and drinking. Just as life is in the hand of Allah in the same way sustenance is also in the hand of Allah which He may or may not provide. I am not aware of Allah's will in this matter. Allah plans matters according to His will. All that I have to do is that I should exercise control over my self.

This point is also important and beneficial for the research scholars.

THE FOURTH POINT

Exalted Allah has guaranteed to provide us with sustenance only to the extent that it may be sufficient to supply food to ensure the development and upkeep of our bodies. As for the matter of eating, when a man devotes himself exclusivly to the worship of Allah with full trust in Him and complete isolation from the people; appears as if his quota of sustenance has been withheld from him. Man should not feel dejected on being deprived of these outward resources,

because Exalted Allah has promised to keep the candle of life burning till the appointed day of death. It is the object of Tawakkul that man's body and soul should be kept together. (To desire more than this is contrary to Tawakkul). In this situation Exalted Allah shall certainly maintain with unseen resources the life of His servant till the appointed day of his death, to enable him to devote himself to worship with due concentration and sincerity. This is the main purpose of man's life. The main aim is to keep body and sole together for the worship of Allah. Exalted Allah has the ability to maintain a man's life as long as He wills. He can do so either with food, or clay and mortar or with the rehearsal of His sacred names and of the Kalimah لا اله الا الله which maintains the lives of the Angels. Allah is Able to maintain life even without any apparent means. The only purpose of maintaining the human body is to worship Allah and not for eating and drinking and enjoying the various tastes and delicacies of life.

All these details make it quite clear that the external resources have nothing to do with affairs concerning sustenance or provisions during these conditions. This belief was firmly impressed on the hearts of the past leaders and saints of the Ummah. It was, therefore not difficult for them to undergo hardships, exertions and starvation for many days during long journeys. Thus, some Shaikh passed without eating anything, for ten days, one month or even two months without feeling any dificiency in their bodily strength and stamina. Some of them are known to have lived only on handfuls of dust as their food.

It is related about Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) that once his provisions ran short in the Makkah Mukarramah and for about fifteen days he lived only on handfuls earth and sand.

Hazrat Abu Mu'awiya-al-Aswad (RA) has said that he and Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) both ate damp clay continuously for twenty days.

Hazrat A'wash (RA) has related that once he came across Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) who said: For about two months I did not eat anything, except that during this period of starvation a man gave me something to eat by adminstering on me an oath. On account of this eating I am still suffering from stomach-ache.

O people! It is not at all necessary to feel surprised at these events, because Exalted Allah has power to do anything. You must have seen that sometimes some patients remain alive without eating anything for the months, although a patient becomes much weaker than a normally healthy man.

If a man dies of hunger during his Tawakkul it should be understood that this was the end of his decreed life and he did not die on account of Tawwakkul. Sometimes death occurs on account of overeating also.

I have heard a story about Hazrat Abu Sa'eed Zarar (RA). He used to say: It was my programme of eating that (I did not eat anything for two days) on every third day Exalted Allah arranged some food for me. It so happened that once I was travelling through a forest. I did not get anything to eat for three days. Feeling very weak on the fourth day I sat down at a place to take rest. Suddenly I heard a voice saying: O Abu Saeed! Do you desire that some food should be arranged for you or do you desire only the necessary strength for walking? When I said that only strength for walking was enough for me, my weakness and hunger at once disappeared. I remained travelling continuously for twelve days without feeling any weakness and inconvenience.

When the external resources are withheld, it is necessary for a Mutamakkil (having trust in Allah) to have full trust in Allah to attract unseen divine help. Instead of feeling dejected on the absence of these external resources, the servant of Allah should be grateful to Allah for His mercy and assistence from the unseen sources, that he relieved him of the distress, took him to the desired goal and saved him from the trouble and burden of searching for the external resources and necessaries of life, enabled him to remember and obey Him without eating and drinking against the normal course of living, made him like the Angels, bestowed on him His special nearness and placed him much above the animals in honour and grace. It is hoped that you shall God willing gain much by reflecting seriously on all these details.

Some may raise an objection that I have broken my promise to be brief by prolonging the discussion. My reply to this objection is that as compared with the importance and difficulty of the issue of earning a livelihood and sustenance, the discussion is very brief. All the activities of the world and the hopes of the Hereafter revolve and depend on this very subject of sustenance. So my advice is that, if you possess the necessary strength to worship Allah, then act upon my suggestions. If a man does not comply with them he has strayed far off from the desired goal.

The past Imams and the saints of Deen enjoyed deep insight concerning the issue of sustenance. This was due to the fact that their lives were based on Tawakkul (Trust) on Allah, full attention to worship and devotion, and isolation from the general public. They have compiled many books and given at the time of their death abundant advice on this subject. That is why Exalted Allah helped them with such sincere assistants and friends as were not available to those who held tenets opposed to the tenets of Ahle-Sunnah wal Jama'at, like the

Karamiyah the basis of whose tenets ran counter to the tenets of Islam.

As for the Ahl-e-Sunnah wal Jama'at, they remained honourable in the sights, of the people and of Exalted Allah and highly qualified students in knowledge and morality graduated from their schools, as long as they adhered to the tenets of their superior saints and followed in their footsteps on the path of Deen.

In the matter of knowledge and learning our leaders are most accomplished scholars men like Ustaz Abu Ishaq Asfarayini (RA), Abu Hamid (RA), Abul Haith Ibn Fork (RA) and my Shaikh (RA). They were all oceans of learning. In the matter of worship and practice. Our leaders are righteous men like Hazrat Abu Ishaq Shirazi (RA), Abu Sa'eed as-Sauf and Abu Nasr. They are all outstanding personalities in learning practice and Taqwa. It is regretted that our hearts failed in following these veterons of Deen and became caught in obstacles which are more harmful than profitable. As a result, we lagged behind in the matter of Deen, lost courage, the blessings of our deeds and the sweetness of our worships disappeared, Now it is very defficult for anyone to attain the right position in learning and Deen. Among those who have in their hearts some light of learning and divine knowledge are only Hazrat Haris Mahasi (RA) Muhammad bin Idris Shafiee (RA), Muzni (RA) Harmalah (RA) etc. This too is only due to the following in the footsteps of the great veterons of the Ummah.

During the early days of Islam the Muslims had become the leaders of the world on account of acting upon the Islamic injunctions. What is our plight now? On account of disobeying the injunctionss of Deen we are no more than ordinary men of the street. Once we were proud and brave horsemen, but now we have gone down to the level of ordinary

pedestrians or even lower than them. Now there is the risk of going astray from the straight path. We pray to Exalted Allah from the cores of our hearts to remove our difficulties and not to deprive ourselves of the little breath of Deen that may still be lurking in some remote recesses of our hearts.

اَنَّهٗ جَوّادٌ كريمٌ منّانٌ رحيمٌ ولاحَول ولا قوّة الا با لله

TAFWEEZ (ENTRUSTMENT)

(The meaning and definition of Tafweez have already been given in the preceding pages).

In order to grasp the reality of Tafweez it is necessary to understand two points!

(1) The authority to decide what is good and what is bad or what is right and what is wrong lies exclusively in that Being, who is fully conversant with the ins and outs, the outside and the inside and the final fate of a thing. There is the danger that an ignorant person may take what is bad or wrong as good or right and what is good or right as bad or wrong. If you ask foolish man to sort our genuine coins from the counterfeit ones he will simply fail to do so. Even an ordinary shopkeeper may also fail in separating the genuine and the counterfeit coin from one another. It will be necessary for this purpose to acquire the services of a banker or a jeweller who understands the signs and characteritics of silver and gold. In the same way it is only Exalted Allah who knows the overall characteristics and realities and the outer and inner properties of everything. Thus, only those plans, programmes and schemes need to be adopted which

are drawn up by the All-Knowing and All-Wise Allah. That is why He has said:

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ مَا كَانَ لَهُمُ الْخِيَرَةُ .

"Your Lord brings to pass what He wills and chooses. They have no choice of their own (in the matter). (28:68)

Again He has said:

وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَعْلَمُ مَا تُكِنُّ صُدُورُهُمْ وَمَا يُعْلِنُونَ ط (سورة النمل : ٧٤)

"Surely, your Lord knows what their bosoms conceal and what they declare. (27:74)

It is related about a righteous saint that Exalted Allah commanded him to pray to Him for what he desired. That saint was a man of spiritual insight. He replied saying: you being the All-Knowing and All-Wise may grant me whatever You consider fit for me. What can an ignorant man like me know what is suitable for him?

(2) What will you think about a man who is well versed in everything, reliable, strong wise as well as merciful and who promises you that he shall dispose of all your affairs, supply all your needs and asks you to remain occupied with your most important duties? Will you not regard this offer as a God-given gift and opportunity?

There is no doubt that you shall regard this offer as a great boon and give the person offering this opportunity your best thanks. You shall praise him highly, feel grateful to him, you shall readily accept the thing or duty he proposes for you, as you yourself do not know anything about it. As you are

convinced that person is your well-wisher who cannot propose for you anything harmful for you, so you shall lose no time in accepting his proposals.

Now consider, when you regard a proposal made by a man as a great blessing, why do you not entrust all your problems and affairs to Exalted Allah, Who alone is the Planner of all affairs and schemes of the world and the heavens. He has more knowledge than the knowledge of all knowledgeable persons in the world and the strongest of all the strong men of the world. In addition He is the Most Merciful, the Most Affluent of all. By His Knowledge and nice planning, He shall appoint for you that which lies beyond your flight of imagination and expectation. So try to do and reform all that is necessary for the betterment of your Hereafter and that is nothing but worship of, and obedience to, Exalted Allah. If Allah appoints for you something, accept with a good grace and satisfaction, even if you may not be aware of the benefit of Allah's choice. There is no occasion to feel dejected and aggrieved at that (even if apparently it looks harmful). Console your heart with the belief that if contains some good for you, (because nothing which that All-Knowing and All-Wise Allah cannot be devoid of some good or benefit in it.)

Acceptance Of The Divine Decree

You should remain satisfied with the will of Exalted Allah (The details of this have also been given in the preceding pages). It is necessary to bear in mind two important points.

(1) In your acceptance of the Divine Decree lies your gain for your present and future lives. As regards the gain in the present life, your heart becomes free from unnecessary worries and grief and receives peace and tranquillity.

A sain has said that when the Divine Decree is sure to take its course and effect it is useless to fall into grief and anxieties. This statement is based on a Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

Hazrat Mas'ood (RAA) has narrated that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

لَيقلّ همُّك وما قدّر يكن وما لم يقدر لم ياتك.

> Your worries and anxieties should be the minimum because only that will happen which has been destined and what has not been destined will never happen.

This Hadith of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) is very comprehansive. Countless benefits have been included in its meaning only in a few words.

With regard to the final fate and the future, the acceptance of the Divine Decree attracts Allah's pleasure and abundant reward and return. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

رضى ا لله عنهم ورضُوا عنه

> Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. (98:8)

Allah's pleasure is necessary in all circumstances and in all matters. On the other hand expressing displeasure with the Divine Decree attracts calamities and grief in this world and becomes a cause of severe punishment in the Hereafter. Your displeasure with the Divine Decree cannot avert the Decree. So it does not behove a wise man of insight to expose himself to the risk of punishment in the Hereafter in preference to the comforts and blessings of Paradise.

In a verse of the Holy Qur'an Allah has said:

فَلَا وَرَبِّكَ لَا يُؤْمِنُونَ حَتَّى يُحَكِّمُوكَ فِيمَا شَجَرَ بَيْنَهُمْ ثُمَّ لَا يَجِدُوا فِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَرَجًا مِمَّا قَضَيْتَ وَيُسَلِّمُوا تَسْلِيمًا . (سورة النساء : ٦٥)

But no, by your Lord, they will not believe (in truth), until they make you judge of what is in dispute between them and find within themselves no dislike of that which you decide and submit to it with full submission. (4:65)

Now see how Exalted Allah has declared, on oath, the disbelief of the person who does not accept the judgement of the Holy Prophet (PBUH). Then what will be the plight of the person who does not submit to a judgement of the Lord of the worlds? In a Divine Hadith Allah has, as reported by the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said:

من لَّم يَرض بقضائى ولم يصْبِر على بلائى
ولم يشكُرْ على نَعمائى فليتّخذ الٰهاً سِوائى

He should take a God other than Me, who does not accept My Decree does not bear with patience the calamities sent by Me, nor does he render thanks on My grants and bounties. (I have nothing to do with this person).

This Divine Hadith means that the person concerned did not acknowledge Allah's authority as the Lord and the Sustainer, because he expressed displeasure at His grants. As such, this man should seek for himself some other God.

To every man of sense and wisdom the above words contain of severe threat and warning (and Allah's wrath). A learned saint was asked the difference between the position of

being an humble servant and that of being the Sustainer Lord. What a nice answer did he give!

> It is ربوبيت (Lordship) that Exalted Allah has the sole power and authority to issue whatever commands He thinks fit. It is عبوديت (being an humble servant) that the servant should accost submissively all the commands of Allah. Where these commands are disobeyed, neither عبوديت (servantship) nor ربوبيت (Lordship) is acknowledge.

Then reflect closely on this sentence and mould yourself into the pattern of عبوديت (servitude) to deserve Allah's pleasure and help.

Patience (endurance) is a very bitter and distasteful medicine, but it is so full of blessings that through this medicine it is easy to reap all gains and to avert all harms and injuries. Men of wisdom and insight take courage to take its bitter dose without caring its bitterness and distaste. They think that the tolerance of moment's bitterness ensures years of gain. We give below some details of the virtue of patience.

There are four kinds of patience / endurance.

1. صبر على الطاعة (Endurance of worship and obedience)
2. صبر على المعصية (Endurance of refraining from sins)
3. صبر عن فضول الدنيا (Endurance of doing unnecessary and superfluous thing of the world)
4. صبر على مصائب الدنيا (Endurance of worldly troubles and hardships)

If a man tolerates the bitterness and distate of all the four kinds of patience he will be granted the blessings of steadfastness on worship and devotion and the greater blessing of the Hereafter. Apart from this, he is saved from the sins, their vices, curses and their repercussions in this world as well as in the Hereafter. As a result of this patience he becomes secure from falling a victim to the worldly affairs and from the harms of the sins, and from suffering losses in his reward and recompence.

Now it becomes evident from these details that it is the quality of patience by virtue of which a man is able to attain the blessings of worship, its higher stages, recompense, Taqwa, righteousness and abstention from sins. (This is an account of benefits of patience.)Its full details are known only to Exalted Allah. The two specific benefits implied in patience are these:

A patient man remains safe in the world from bewilderment, restlessness and hues and cries as well as from the punishment and torments of the Hereafter. As for him who displays negligence restlessness and impatience in the matter of patience he is deprived of all sorts of benefits and has to face all sorts of harms and losses. If he does not take to endurance in worship and obedience, he cannot worship Allah in right earnest. If he does not observe patience in the act of protecting his devotion he shall spoil it. If he does not remain patient in regularity in his worship, he will not be able to reach the highest degrees of steadfastness.

In the same way if he does not take to patience in shunning sins, he will fall into sins. If he does not adhere to patience in avoiding the unnecessary and superfluous resources of the world he shall become involved in them. If he does not observe patience in confronting the various calamities and distresses, he shall be deprived of the reward and return

for patience and its bounties. In case he exhibits too much impatience and restlessness he shall lose all sorts of rewards and recompenses. In this way he shall have to face two types of distresses. (i) Losing the thing which had thrown him into impatience and restlessness and (ii) Losing the reward which he would have earned for enduring the distress. This means facing an unpleasant situation as well as being deprived of the virtue of patience and endurance.

Some people say that not to endure calamities with patience is a greater calamity. What is the use of something which causes the loss of what is in the hand and cannot restore what has been lost. One should therefore do his best to protect from loss at least one thing, if the other one has been lost.

A statement of Hazrat Ali bin Abu Talib, the Leuder of the Believers (RAA) is very comprehensive and enlightening. He (RAA) said:

إِنْ صبَرتَ جرت عليك المْقاديروأنـت مـاجور وان جزعـت جـرت
عليك المقادير و نت مأزور.

> If you observe patience (on your distress), you will earn rewards according to the Divine Decree. But if you raise a hue and cry in impatience you will be a sinner according to that Decree.

SECTION 3

I say that these are very difficult tasks: to cut the heart off from its desires; to put full trust in Glorious Allah; to keep the heart away from its confirmed and tenacious habits; to give up worldly resources and schemes and entrust them to Allah without discovering their secret causes; to cheek the self from its displeasure and restlessness; although it may be hurrying

towards them; to put on the self by force the bridle of submission to the Divine Decree; to make it drink the bitter dose of patience despite its disgust. These are very difficult and arduous tasks and their settlement forms a huge burden. Any way, this is the only effective remedy for the cure of the self and this is the straight path which may prove fruitful and productive of useful results.

What will you say about a father whose son has some pain in his eyes, he therefore forbids his son to eat apple and dates, entrusts him to the care of a strict teacher the whole day long, who keeps the son confined with him and sends him to a primitive surgeon to inflict cuts on him, who subjects the son to pain and distress? Will you attribute these acts of the father to his miserliness? No, never he is a generous father. Will you think that the son is not dear to him? This is also not possible, because the father is working hard to earn and amass worldly wealth and resources for his son. Does he want to torture his son for some reason? This too is not possible because his son is the cool of his eyes and the solace of his heart. The father feels disturbed at a little indisposition of his son. Now it appears that none of these suppositions hold good here. The truth is that the father wants to save his son from a greater calamity by subjecting him to a lesser distress.

In the same way what will you say about a physician who forbids his patient to drink water early in the morning with empty stomach when the patient is restless with, and his liver is burning with, thirst, but instead of water the physician prescribes for him some bitter and distasteful medicine. Will this behaviour of the physician be counted as an act of enmity with his patient? No not at all. It will be regarded as an act of sympathy with the patient, as the physician knows very well that if the patient's wish is fulfilled, he may die and he knows that his cure lies in forbidding him to take his favourite foods and drinks.

In the light of these details you should understand that if Allah is withholding you from a loaf of bread or a coin of Dirhim, this is in your own interest. You know for certain that Exalted Allah has in His possession your favourite things which He is Able to give you, if He so wills. His grant is common to all, He knows very well your conditions and circumstances, nothing is hidden from Him, with Him is neither poverty nor helplessness, nor oppressian nor tyranny. He is far above all these vices. He is the Richer than all the rich. Stronger than all the Strongest, the Most powerful, Most Knowing, Most Generous. Notwithstanding all this when He is withholding from you something, there must be some good for you in this. He has Himself declared in the Holy Qur'an:

خَلَقَ لَكُمْ مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا ط (سورة البقرة : ٢٩)

He has created for you all that is in the earth.

This is because He created you so that He may bestow upon you the greatest blessing of knowing Him and recognising Him. In the face of this every other blessing of the world has no value at all. Allah has said in a Divine Hadith:

انى لازود اوليائى عن نعيم الدنيا كما يزود الراعى الشفيق ابلهٗ عن مبارك العرة

I keep my friends away from the blessings of the world as a kind herdsman keeps his camels away from the camels suffering from scabies.

When you are put to some severe test by Exalted Allah, you should understand very well that Allah does not desire putting you to this test, because He is Aware of your lack of courage and your poor conditions. He is also Merciful to you. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

للّه أرحم بعبده المؤمن من الوالدة الشفيقة بولدها.

"Allah is indeed more Merciful to His Believing servant than a kind mother to her child."

These godly men are put to severe tests, despite the fact that they are very honourable and respectable in the sight of Exalted Allah. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith:

اذا احب الله قوماً ابتلاهم .

When Allah loves a community subjects them to tests and distresses.

At another place the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said:

إن أشدّ الناس بلاءً الأنبياء ثم الشهداء ثم الأمثل ثمّ الأمثل

It is the Prophets (AS) on whom descend the severest hardships and calamities, Then the martyrs then those who come next to them then the next to them and so an so forth.

So if Exalted Allah keeps you away from blessings and enjoyments and frequently thrown on you hardships and difficulties, you should feel sure that it is a sign of honour for you and that you are occupying a position of esteem and dignity in the sight of Allah. He wants you to take the path of His friends. He is well Aware of your activities and circumstances and He does not stand in need of you in any way:

وَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ فَإِنَّكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا ط (سورة الطور:٤٨)

Wait with patience for the command of your Lord (Allah). You are indeed under (the vigilence of) Our eyes. (52:48)

The entire discussion boils to the conclusion that on being inflicted with hardships and distresses we should feel grateful to Him. He Himself ordains for us goodness and well-being, increases our reward and return and appoints for us the status of the righteous and favoured servants. وا لله ولى التوفيق

SECTION 4

To sum up, you are well aware that Exalted Allah has guaranteed for you that quantity of sustenance which is necessary to maintain your life and assist you on worship and devotion. He has also an eye on your problems and affairs. He has the ability to supply all your needs as and when He wills. Now you should have full trust in Allah's guarantee and surety. You should have reliance on His promises. This will cut your heart off from the worldly contacts and relations and bestow on it peace and tranquillity. You shall know that futility of all these worldly resources and relations and in reality nothing except Allah is profitable and helpful in any way. It is exclusively His prerogative to provide food and drink, help in its digestion, to make it provide nutrition, to save the body from its harmful effects. It is Allah alone Who affords gains ad benefits without resources and means. It is therefore necessary to rely on Him alone and to entrust all of one's affairs to Him for solution. He being that manages the affairs of the earth and the heavens and Who has no partner. If your intellect is not able to understand the secret and reality of anything, do not go after that nor try to know whether such a thing will or will not take place tomorrow. Save yourself from the words "perhaps" and "if", thereby you get nothing except fretting your heart and wasting your time. It is possible that something unexpected and unimaginable may take place tomorrow. It is, therefore,

useless to concentrate the heart on such matters; it is rather harmful. You may have to feel regret in the end after having set your heart and having wasted your precious time on such notions. Some wise man has said :

سبقت مقادير الا لهٖ وحِكمهٖ فأرح فؤادك من لعلّ ولَوْ

"Allah has ordained His Decree, to relieve your heart from the puzzling words of "Perhaps" and "if".

You should be instructing your self from time to time in this way.

O my self! You shall get only that which Exalted Allah has ordained for you. He is our Creator and our Master. He is sufficient for us. He is the Solver of all our problems. His power and might know no bounds. His wisdom is also endless. Similarly His mercy is also inestimable. One should entrust one's affairs to a Being Who possesses comprehensive qualities, because entrustment is quite unavoidable and indispensable.

Man should try to fix in his heart whatever Allah decides about us is better and beneficial for us, because our intellect cannot grasp the reality and good of the Divine Judgement. It should be impressed on the heart that the Divine Decree must take its course, and whatever Allah does is good and in our interest. There is, therefore, no good in feeling offended at that Decree. When you have acknowledged Allah as your Lord and have said رضيت با لله (I have accepted Allah), why should you be displeased with His Decree? You must act upon Allah's Decree, because the Divine Decree is a symbol of Allah's status as a Lord and Sustainer.

When some distress and mishap falls on you, you must control yourself and refrain from expressing impatience and restlessness by bewailing weeping ad raising a hue and cry. It is necessary to resort to patience at the appearance of the mishap, as it is very difficult to maintain patience at that time when the self gives way to impatience and deep dejection. At such a critical time you should address the self in this way: The calamity has fallen and it is not in our power to avert it. It is possible that Exalted Allah has saved us from a more severe calamity by subjecting us to the smaller calamity, because Allah has with Him a store-house of distresses and calamities. It is a temporary phase and the distress is destined to pass off soon. It is necessary at this moment to pull up courage to reap countless rewards and returns. What has come down cannot be averted now and there is no gain in showing impatience. When once you have taken to patience and endurance, the mishap shall lose its impact. Engage your tongue in rehearsing the words انا لله وانا اليه راجعون (We belong to Allah and we shall return to Him) and employ your heart in the hope of earning rewards for patience. You should remember the life -stories of the favoured persons of Allah, dignified Prophets (A.S.) and the friends of Allah who remained patient in the face of tremendous calamities.

If Exalted Allah ever withholds for you the worldly means and resources, address yourself thus :

> O my self ! That sustainer Lord is well aware of your condition. He is so merciful that He provides sustenance even to His meanest non - believing enemies. You are His servant, a believer in His Oneness and are in search of knowledge about Him. Are you not even worth a loaf of bread in His sight? This is not so ! If He has kept you away from the world, there must be some wisdom and benefit in this. If

you are undergoing scarcity and poverty at the moment, Allah will surely replace this difficult state with ease and comfort soon after. Only have a little patience and you shall see scenes of generous grants and bounties.

By impressing your heart with these thoughts and imaginations and by a little courage and exertion you shall cross over this valley in a short time. You will thus have achieved freedom from labour and effort after having crossed over these four valleys of obstacles and hindrances. Now you have been enlisted in the list of those who have trust in Allah, submit to the Divine Decree and behave with patience an endurance, you have also become entitled in the Hereafter to high status in the Divine Court, peace of mind and comfort of body, Allah's love and unlimited reward and recompense. You have become destined to receive the blessings and prosperity of both the worlds. The path of worship which you have taken in the beginning has now become for you the straight path. Now there is none to stop you from that path, nor to entangle you in unnecessary activities. You have thus crossed over this difficult valley also.

We pray to Allah to help us all to do good deeds and help us in all our difficulties, as He alone is the solver of all problems and the Most Merciful.

ولاحول ولا قوة الا با لله العلى العظيم .

Chapter Five

THE VALLEY OF URGE AND IMPETUS.

بواعث means those matters that urge men and apply impetus to them to take to worship and devotion)

O my brother ! Now the path of worship has become straight for you ; the obstacles and hindrances have disappeared. So, it is necessary for you to reach the goal of sulook (the course of Deen) by walking on the path of worship. However, for attaining successes in completing this course, it is necessary for you to inculcate in yourself the two qualities of خوف (fear) and رجاء (hope), according to your capacity.

TWO REASONS FOR CREATING FEAR

Abstain from sins by guarding yourself from the vices and mischief of this insinuating self. The self involves men in sins and corruption. It is therefore necessary to stop it from its

mischief by holding out to it some severe threat and the strong warning of fear.

The self, by its very nature is not expected to display loyalty or to give up disloyalty on account of a feeling of shows and modesty. It is said:

العبد يقرع بالعصا   والحر يكفيه الملامة

> The slave is beaten with a stick (to set him right), but a little censure is enough for a free man (to correct him).

It is therefore, necessary to keep the self under control to beat it with the whip of Fear, in all its activities viz. speech, practice and thinking.

For example it is related about a saint that his self tried to instigate him to some sin. To avert the situation he took off his clothes and began to roll about on to burning ground and censured his self thus :

> O self, who are sleeping during nights like a deaf man and remaining idle during days, taste this torment . Think that the punishment of Hell is more severe.

2. Fear is necessary, lest without it the self should perish by becoming proud of your worship. It is, therefore necessary to find fault with it and blame it from time to time that it may remain informed of the sins and vices and the harms and risks involved in them. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has mentioned this point in a Hadith.

لَو أنّي وعيسٰیٰ اُوخذنا بما اكتسبت هاتان لعُذّبنا عذابًا لم يعذّبه احداً من العالمين (واشار باصبعيه)

"If I (PBUH) and Hazrat Eesa (Christ - AS) taken to task for our deeds, pointing to something with his two fingers, we would have been punished with a punishment with which none else was punished in the whole world."

It is related that Ibn Semak (RA) used to censure his self in this way:

"You talk like the pious and the righteous, but your deeds are like those of the hypocrites, yet you are aspiring for Paradise. Those fit for Paradise are a different group of people, whose deeds are different from yours."

In short it is necessary to address the self in this way, to protect it from falling into pride and committing sins. So much has been said about خوف (fear).

رَجاء (HOPE)

The other quality is that of رجاء (Hope).

This is also necessary for two reasons :

In order to encourage and induce anyone towards worship, provision of incentives and prizes are necessary. Worship and righteous deeds lie very heavy on the self and are very tiresome on the other hand, the Self and Satan both are busy in deviating men from righteous deeds. Men have generally before their eyes the deeds of the negligent people who are drowned mostly in sins and useless activities. There is another point also. The reward and recompense in the hope of which good deeds are done remain hidden from the eyes and the attainment of these rewards and recompense is a very

remote issue. It is very difficult in such a situation for the self to feel inclined towards good deeds. Something is therefore, necessary which may counteract these opposing forces of seductions. it is also necessary that forces inducing men to do good deeds should be stronger than the agents goading men towards sins and vices. My Shaikh (RA) has said:

الحزن يمنع عن الطعام والخوف يمنع عن الذنوب والرجاء يقوى على الطاعات وذكر الموت يزهد في الفضول

"Grief stops men from food, fear stops men from sins, hope strengthens men on worship and devotion and remembrance of death stops men from useless and superfluous activities.

2. By virtue of رجاء (hope) it becomes easier for men to endure difficulties and distresses that confront them in doing good deeds. If a man is aware of the importance and value of his objective it becomes easy for him to make sacrifices for this objective and to endure hardships and troubles to achieve it. If a man falls in love with anyone, he also loves the hardships and troubles for the sake of his beloved until he begins to enjoy the hardship and distress. For example, a man who extracts honey from the honeycomb of the bees cannot give up this job for fear of the bees' stings, because he knows the value and sweetness of the honey. In the some way it becomes easy for a labourer to climb up stairs with a heavy load on a very hot day, because he knows that in the evening he shall receive a few Dirhams the benefit and value of which are well known to him.

A cultivator puts in hard labour in cultivating his field during winter and summer days throughout the year for the sake of the grain he harvests from his field.

Similarly it becomes very easy for the worshipper and workers on the path of Deen to bear the torments of devotion after renouncing the worldly comforts, charms and tastes when they imagine Paradise is equipped with bounties of all kinds, ease and comfort, its palatial apartments and the beautiful garments and ornaments and all sorts of blessings which Exalted Allah has provided for the inmates of Paradise.

It is related about Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) that when his disciples saw him undergoing great austerity and hardships in his worship and devotion along with extreme fear of Allah, they could not help telling him : O our respected Ustaz, you will, God willing, reach your desired goal even if you reduce a little your hard work and exertions.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri replied, saying : Why should I lag behind when this narration has reached me that the inmates of Paradise will be in their rooms of Paradise when a light will suddenly appear and illuminate all the eight Paradises. The inmates will think that it is. the light emanating from the Lord of the worlds and they shall all fall down in prostration. Then a voice will suddenly be heard from the unseen, saying :

> Raise up your heads. The matter is not that as you think. This was the light of a woman of Paradise who had smiled before her husband.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri then recited these complete :

ما ضر من كانت الفردَوس مَسكُنهُ ما تحمل من بؤس وآضار
تراه بيمشى كتيبا خائفا وجلا الى المساجد يمشى بين اطمار
يا نفس مالك من صبر على لهب قد حان ان تقبلى من بعد ادبار

These couplets mean :

There is no harm in enduring hardships and distresses for him whose place of abode is the Paradise of Firdous.

Such a man is seen dejected terrified and apprehensive about the horrors of the Hereafter. He goes to the mosque for praying in humbleness and modesty.

O self ! you have no strength to bear the blazing fire of Hell. The time has come that (on account of bad deeds). you may have to bear this punishment with much disgrace and degradation.

After all these details I say that worship and servitude depend on two factors - (1) To embark upon worship and devotion with a firm resolve and (2) to abstain from sins and vices. But this objective cannot be achieved in the face of the self, unless you stand against it with steadfastness and continue urging it on doing good deeds, holding out to it the hope of reward in the Hereafter, and warning it against the Divine punishment. To control any rebellious animal two men are required, one to push it on from behind and the other to pull it forward from the front. If the animal falls into a pit it is whipped from one side and food is shown to it from the other side to pull it out from the pit.

In the same way when a naughty and ignorant boy does not go to school, his parents encourage him with a hopeful future and his teacher threatens and beats him in order to correct and reform him.

This self is also like a rebellious animal that is falling into the pit of the world. The fear of the punishment of the Hereafter is the whip to push it forward from behind and the

hope of reward and return is its food and driver to pull it forward from the front. The self too can be compared to a naughty boy. When the boy is admitted into the school of Taqwa and worship he is frightened with the fear of divine punishment and he is encouraged and induced with the hope of Paradise, reward and return in the Hereafter. It is therefore, necessary for the traveller on the path of Deen to generate in him both fear and hope without which this naughty and rebellious self will never cooperate with you in this righteous work. That is why promises and threats of punishment and fear and hope have been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an at many places with full details. The promise of reward and return has been mentioned so frequently that one who reads about them cannot help trying to attain them. The threat of punishment has also been mentioned in the Holy Qur'an with the same details and repetitions that the reader begins to think that he is unable to endure the divine punishment. It is therefore, necessary to take resort to both these remedies, i.e., Fear and Hope, so as to attain the objective of worship and servitude and to endure the difficulties and distresses of the path with ease, facility and without any hesitation

THE REALITY OF FEAR AND HOPE AND THE INJUCTIONS THEREOF

What is the reality of Fear and Hope and what are the injunctions concerning them?

In so far as the opinion of our learned men and Shaikhs is concerned Fear and Hope are forms of realization (of fear and hope) in the heart. As regards the common servants of Allah, it is necessary to act upon the preliminary demands of fear and hope. Fear has been defined as under :

الخوف رعدة تحدث فی القلب عن ظن مکروه ینالهٔ

"Fear is a shivering which arises in the heart by the realization of undesirable and disgustful events.

The Arabic word خشیّت (fear) is also used in the same sense except that a sort of awe and grandeur is implied in its meaning. In other words, the thing that is feared creates in the heart a feeling of grandeur and awe.

The opposite word for fear is courage and audacity. Sometimes the word "peace" is also taken as the opposite of fear, i.e., to become free from fear. It is said that a person is frightened and another person is safe and secure. That is, both shades of the meaning are used against one another as antonyms. خائف وآمن (frightened and secure are nouns of the words خوف و امن (fear and security). The genuine opposite of the word fear is audacity. A man in security or devoid of fear is he who shows indifference to the authority and commands of Allah.

THE PREFACES TO FEAR

There are four prefaces to Fear.

A man should remember all the major sins he has committed in his past life and all those men whose rights are outstanding against him

He should think of the painful punishments of Allah and their severity which he has no strength to bear.

He should think of the weakness and helplessness of his body and soul which have no capacity to bear Allah's punishment.

4. He should think of the Greatness, Power and capacity of Allah Who can catch hold of anyonc as and when He wills.

THE MEANING OF HOPE

Hope has been defined in this way:

هو إبتهاج القلب بمعرفة فضل الله سبحانه واسترواحة الى رحمة الله تعالى

Hope means pleasure of the heart on the knowledge of the mercy of Glorious Allah and on receiving ease and comfort from the vast mercy of Allah.

Hope is also related with the feelings of the heart and lies beyond a man's control. It is however, in man's power to conceive of Allah's vast mercy and bounty.

The word رجاء (Hope) is used in another sense also. Man should believe about all risks and calamities that they can do no harm, whatsoever, without the will and intention of Allah. The meaning given earlier is applicable in this chapter. The opposite word for this رجاء (Hope) is dejection or despondency which implies that a man totally loses hope from Allah's mercy and grant and cuts his heart from this attribute (mercy) of Allah. Despondency to this extent is a shear sin. In a situation of such hopelessness and dejection it is an obligatory duty to build hopes and expectations on Allah. When a man attains the quality of complete hope from, and reliance on, Allah's mercy and compassion, then to entertain. رجاء (hope) becomes only an optional (نفل) duty for him.

HOPE ALSO HAS FOUR PREFACES.

1. Man should remember all the grants and bounties which he had been receiving from Exalted Allah direct without any title or right to them and without any intercession.

2. He should remember all the promises for great rewards and returns which Exalted Allah has made out of His mercy and not in proportion to man's deeds. These reward would be very scanty, if they were based on the quantity and quality of man's deeds, but they are very generous.

3. He should think of those rewards and grants which Allah has ordained for man's deeds and acts for the world and for Deen, without considering his ability and title to them.

4. He should think of Allah's vast mercy which far exceeds His wrath and should also think that Allah is All-Merciful and All-Compassionate for His servants.

If you follow these directions and always remember them you can qualify yourself with the quality of رجاء (Hope)

SECTION 1

PRINCIPLES TO CONTROL SELF

You have to be very careful and cautious in crossing over this valley of Fear and Hope because it is very difficult and fraught with doubts suspicions and fears. The reason is that this valley is situated between two very difficult valleys (1) the valley of peace and security and total freedom from fear and (2) the valley of hopelessness and despondency. Man should take his path on the path of fear and Hope through these two very risky and difficult valleys. On this journey he

should maintian a balance betweeen Fear and Hope, without leaning to the one by ignoring the other. If "Hope" becomes predominant the man will go astray on the path of total "security", ignoring the path of fear altogether and this is not right. The Holy Qur'an says :

فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُوْنَ (سورة الا عراف : ٩٩)

None deems himself secure from Allah's scheme except the losers. (7 : 99)

Likewise, if fear becomes predominant man will fall on the path of hopelessness and despondency, deviating tatally from the path of Hope. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

إِنَّهُ لَا يَيْأَسُ مِنْ رَّوْحِ اللهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُوْنَ . (سورة يوسف : ٨٧)

None despairs of the Spirit (mercy) of Allah except the community of the disbelievers. (12:87)

On the other hard, if the servant of Allah keeps between Hope and Fear and holds fast to both, then this is the straight path, the path of the friends of Allah and the men of Deen. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوْا يُسَارِعُوْنَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُوْنَنَا رَغَبًا وَّرَهَبًا وَّكَانُوْا لَنَا خَاشِعِيْنَ . (سورة الانبياء: ٩٠)

They used to rush up to good deeds and they used to call upon Us in longing and in fear. (21:90)

It appears from all this detail that this valley consists of three paths:

1. The path of security and fearlessness.

2. The path of hopelessness and despondency.

3. The path of Hope and Fear that passes through the first two paths.

If the servant of Allah takes this straight path (the path of Hope and Fear) without leaning to the first or the second path, he will achieve success. If he abandons this middle course and turns even in the least degree to the right or the left, he will fall into the valley of ruin and become a total loser.

The two paths on the right and the left are wide and spacious, full of many tempting factors, but the middle path (of Hope and Fear) is narrow. It is much easier to take one of the wider paths. If you look at the first path of security and Fearlessness you shall see unlimited mercy of Allah and His countless bounties and grants, free from all vestiges of fear and apprehensions. By relying on His infinite mercy on this path you will become totally fearless and carefree.

If you take the other path of hopelessness and despondency, you shall see on it scenes of Allah's severe punishment and arrests even for the slightest lapses. In such a situation you shall lose all hopes and fall a victim to total despondency.

It is therefore very important that man should not have his eyes exclusively on Allah's mercy and become bold even on sins, nor should he have his eyes on the path of hopelessness and lose all hope of salvation. It is, therefore, essential that man should have his eyes on both sides of Hope and Fear, but should take a middle course in between the two paths. This middle course guarantees success in this world as well as in the Hereafter. This middle path is difficult but straight and safe and leads to final success. This path takes the traveller through the stages of forgiveness, Ihsan (proficiency

in goodness) to the final goals of Paradise, Allah's pleasure, then to the great honour of direct vision of Exalted Allah. Glorious Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an about the traveller on this path :

يَدْعُوْنَ رَبَّهُمْ خَوْفًا وَّطَمَعًا (سورة السجدة : ١٦)

--- they call upon their Lord in fear and hope. (32:16)

And He has further said :

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُمْ مِّنْ قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوْا يَعْمَلُوْنَ (سورة السجدة : ١٧)

No souls knows what has been kept hidden for them of enjoyments as a reward for what they used to do. (32:17)

Read this Quranic verse with due attention and gird up your loins to act upon the injunctions contained in it. Beware that it is not easy to traverse on this path. Help comes only from Exalted Allah. It is also necessary to remember the following three principles to keep under control this rebellious self, to induce it to do good, to give up desires and to earn recompense for sincere worship. We have to protect them without showing the least negligence and lethargy.

1. To remember those verses of the Holy Qur'an which induce men to Fear and Hope and good deeds and stop them from bad deeds.

2. To reflect on such actions of Exalted Allah as He takes either to take to task His servants or to forgive their sins.

3. He should remember that on the Day of Judgement Allah shall bestow upon some persons His favours and

rewards and inflict upon some His punishment. Large volumes are necessary for giving detailed accounts of each of these principles. For this purpose I have compiled a separate book titled تنبيه الغافلين (A warning to the negligent). At this place I am mentioning only a few points in brief which may help one desirous of reaching the desired goal.

PRINCIPLE 1

VERSES OF THE HOLY QUR'AN ABOUT HOPE AND FEAR.

There are many verses in the Holy Qur'an about encouragement, warning, hope and Fear.

This is one of the verses about رجاء (Hope)

وَلَا تَقْنَطُوْا مِنْ رَّحْمَةِ اللهِ اِنَّ اللهَ يَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ جَمِيْعًا. (سورة الزمر:٥٣)

Despair not of the mercy of Allah. Surely Allah forgives all sins. (39 : 53)

The following verses also deal with the same point.

وَمَنْ يَّغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّا اللهُ (سورة آل عمران : ١٣٥)

And who forgives sins except only Allah? (3:135)

غَافِرِ الذَّنْبِ وَقَابِلِ التَّوْبِ (سورة المؤمن : ٣)

(Allah) the Forgiver of Sin and the Acceptor of repentance. (40 :3).

وَهُوَ الَّذِىْ يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهٖ وَيَعْفُوْا عَنِ السَّيِّاٰتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُوْنَ ○ (سورة الشورى:٢٥)

He (Allah) is who accepts repentance from His servants and pardons the evil deeds and knows what you do. (42 : 25)

كَتَبَ رَبُّكُمْ عَلٰى نَفْسِهِ الرَّحْمَةَ . (سورة الانعام : ١٢)

Lord has prescribed for Himself. Your mercy (6 :12)

رَحْمَتِيْ وَسِعَتْ كُلَّ شَيْئٍ فَسَأَكْتُبُهَا لِلَّذِيْنَ يَتَّقُوْنَ . (سورة الاعراف:١٥٦)

And My mercy embraces all things, so I shall ordain it for those who are God fearing. (7:156)

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ بِالنَّاسِ لَرَءُوْفٌ الرَّحِيْمٌ (سورة البقره : ١٤٣)

Surely, Allah is full of pity, Merciful towards mankind. (2 : 143)

وَكَانَ بِالْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ رَحِيْمًا . (سورة الاحزاب : ٤٣)

And He is Merciful to the believers. (33:43)

In short, these and other verses deal with the topic of رجاء(Hope).

The following verses deal with Fear and Threat.

يٰعِبَادِ فَاتَّقُوْنِ (سورة الزمر : ١٦)

O My servants, Fear Me.

اَفَحَسِبْتُمْ اَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَّاَنَّكُمْ اِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُوْنَ . (سورة المؤمنون:١١٥)

Do you then, think that We created you in vain and that you will not be returned to Us?

أَيَحْسَبُ الْإِنْسَانُ أَنْ يُتْرَكَ سُدًى (سورة القيامة : ٣٦)

Does man think that he shall be left aimless? (75:36)

لَيْسَ بِأَمَانِيِّكُمْ وَلَا أَمَانِيِّ أَهْلِ الْكِتَابِ مَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا يُجْزَ بِهِ . (سورة النساء : ١٢٣)

It will not be according to your desires nor the desires of the people of the scripture. he who does wrong will be repaid therewith. (6 : 123)

الَّذِينَ ضَلَّ سَعْيُهُمْ فِي الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا وَهُمْ يَحْسَبُونَ أَنَّهُمْ يُحْسِنُونَ صُنْعًا . (سورة الكهف : ١٠٤)

--- those whose efforts go astray in the life of the world, and yet they reckon that they are doing good deeds. (18 : 104)

وَبَدَا لَهُمْ مِنَ اللهِ مَا لَمْ يَكُونُوا يَحْتَسِبُونَ . (سورة الزمر:٤٨)

---And there will appear to them from Allah that which they did not reckon. (39 : 47)

وَقَدِمْنَا إِلَى مَا عَمِلُوا مِنْ عَمَلٍ فَجَعَلْنَاهُ هَبَاءً مَنْثُورًا . (سورة الفرقان:٢٣)

And We shall turn to the work they did and make it scattered motes. (25 : 23)

May Allah save, us all, by His mercy, from the vice of fearlessness.

Below are given a few verses which contain a description of Fear as well as Hope.

نَبِّئْ عِبَادِىْ اَنِّىْ اَنَاالْغَفُوْرُ الرَّحِيْمُ (سورة الحجر : ٤٩)

Announce (O Muhammad) to my servants that surely I am the Forgiving, the Merciful. (15:49)

وَاَنَّ عَذَابِىْ هُوَ الْعَذَابُ الْاَلِيْمُ . (سورة الحجر : ٥٠)

And surely My punishment is the painful punishment. (15 : 50)

This was said so that they may not become over confident and hopeful.

وَاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ وَاعْلَمُوا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ شَدِيْدُ الْعِقَابِ . (سورة البقرة: ١٩٦)

And fear Allah and know that Allah is severe in punishment. (2 : 196)

ذِى الطَّوْلِ لَا اِلٰهَ اِلَّا هُوَ (سورة المؤمن : ٣)

Very mighty; there is no God, but He. (40 : 3)

In the following two verses Allah has mentioned very wonderful points.

وَيُحَذِّرُكُمُ اللّٰهُ نَفْسَهٗ وَاللّٰهُ رَءُوْفٌ بِالْعِبَادِ . (سورة العمران : ٣٠)

Allah bids you to beware of Him. And Allah is full of pity for (His) servants. (3 : 30)

مَنْ خَشِيَ الرَّحْمٰنَ بِالْغَيْبِ (سورة ق : ٣٣)

--- who fears the Beneficent without having ever seen Him. (50:33)

In this verse Allah has used the word خشی (fear) along with the word رحمان (Beneficent) which is an attribute of Allah. The word رحمان means Kind or Merciful. He did not use the word خشی with His other names like منتقم (One who takes revenge), متکبر (Proud) and جبار (Almighty). It was to combine the word خشی (fear) with the qualities of kindness, mercy and hope, so that fear may not totally overpower the servant of Allah and make him dejected and despondent altogether. He has also mentioned activity and movement along with calmness and quietude. For example we often say : Do you not fear your kind mother or your kind father or do you not fear your forgiving ruler?

The whole discussion boils to the conclusion that we should take the path of fear tempered with hope and beware of total hope or total fear.

May Almighty Allah, by His mercy, help us all to reflect upon the Holy Qur'an and act upon its injunctions. He is very Merciful and Generous.

ولا حول ولا قوة الا با لله العلى العظيم

PRINCIPLE 2

ACTIVITIES AND DEALINGS OF EXALTED ALLAH

One way of creating fear in the heart is that you should reflect upon the various events taking place in the world.

Iblis worshipped Glorious Allah for eighty years and he did not leave during his entire life a space measuring even one step where he did not prostrate himself. But his eighty year's worship was rejected for disobeying only one command

of Allah. He was condemned and turned out of the Divine Court till the Day of Judgement. Eternal torment was prepared for him.

It occurs in the narratives that the Holy Prophet (PBUH) saw Hazrat Jibrael (AS) sticking to the skirts of the Ka'bah and weeping who was praying to Allah : O Allah, do not strike my name off the list of the righteous persons and your beloved ones and do not change my body for the sake of evil instead of goodness.

Consider likewise the case of Hazrat Adam (AS).How dignified a Prophet and a servant of Allah he (AS) is that Allah created him (AS) with His own hands, blew into his body. His own spirit He made the Angels bow down before him (AS) and called him in His presence riding on the Angels. But when he ate a grain without Allah's permission, Allah resented Hazrat Adam's disobedience by saying :

اَلا لا يجاورُنى مَن عَصانى

One who disobeys me cannot live in My neighbourhood.

Allah commanded the Angels who had brought Hazrat Adam (AS) to Paradise to take Hazrat Adam (AS) down from one heaven to the second and from the second to the third till he was finally placed on the earth.

It occurs in the narratives that the repentance of Hazrat Adam (AS) ws accepted after he had wept for two hundred years. Imagine how much distress he (AS) might have endured during this long period. His progeny (i.e. the human race) was afflicted with this distress for ever and ever.

In the same way Hazrat Nooh (Noah - AS) endured great hardships and torture in spreading the message of Islam among his people for over nine hundred years, but once he uttered some irrelevant word and received such a stern reply.

فَلَا تَسْئَلْنِ مَا لَيْسَ لَكَ بِهِ عِلْمٌ اِنِّيْ اَعِظُكَ اَنْ تَكُوْنَ مِنَ الْجَاهِلِيْنَ .
(سورة هود: ٤٦)

So do not ask of Me about which you have no knowledge. I warn you, lest you should be among the ignorant. (11 : 46)

It occurs in the narratives that after this admonition Hazrat Nooh (AS) did not turn his head in the direction of the heavens for forty years out of extreme shame and grief.

Also think how Hazrat Ibrahim Khalil-ul-Lah (AS), whom Exalted Allah had taken as His friend, once uttered something irrelevant at which he expressed deep fear and humbleness.

وَالَّذِيْ اَطْمَعُ اَنْ يَّغْفِرَلِيْ خَطِيْئَتِيْ يَوْمَ الدِّيْنِ . (سورة لاشعراء : ٨٢)

And Who, I ardently hope, will forgive me my sin on the Day of Judgement. (26 : 82)

It is narrated that when he wept bitterly on account of extreme fear Exalted Allah would send Hazrat Jibrael (AS) to him (AS), saying : O Ibrahim have you ever seen that a friend has ever burnt his friend in fire? Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) would reply saying: O Jibrael, when I realize my sin, I forget the truth about His friendship.

In the same way think also of the story of Hazrat Moosa bin Imran (AS) that he (AS) had only slapped a Coptic person, yet he indulged long in fear, humility and repentance. The Qur'an quotes him (AS), saying :

رَبِّ إِنِّيْ ظَلَمْتُ نَفْسِيْ فَاغْفِرْلِيْ : (سورة القصص : ١٦)

My Lord ! I have wronged my soul, so forgive me. (28 : 16)

During the time of Prophet Moosa (AS) there lived a man, Bal'am Baa'ura. Allah had granted him such knowledge and insight that he could see the Divine Throne (عرش) as and when he desired. The following verse of the Holy Qur'an refers to this man :

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِىْ آتَيْنَاهُ آيَاتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَأَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطَانُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغَاوِيْنَ. (سورة الأعراف:١٧٨)

Recite to them the tale of him to whom We gave our revelations but he ran away from them so Satan overtook him and he became among those who had gone astray. (7:175)

Here Exalted Allah did not refer only to one revelation which He had granted that man. But when that man turned to the people of the world and showed no regard to the man of God, Allah deprived him of the knowledge of Him and compared him to a dog ;

فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ إِنْ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ أَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَثْ (سورة الأعراف:١٧٦)

So his example is like the example of a dog that if you load him with some burden the pants with his tongue drawn out and if you leave him even then he pants with his tongue drawn out. (7 : 176)

Then Allah inflicted upon him everlasting punishment and ruin. Some learned men have related that in the beginning about twelve thousand (12000) disciples used to sit round him

with their pens and papers to take down his sermons, but when his mind was upset he compiled a book in which he wrote that there is no creator of this universe (God forbid). He became liable to curse and condemnation.

We seek refuge with Exalted Allah from His wrath, disgrace and defamation as we do not possess the power to endure these punishments and distresses.

It is necessary to remember that the vices of the world and the evils of the deeds put to disgrace even erudite Ulama. It is therefore, necessary to discharge this heavy responsibility with great care and caution. Our lives are short and consequently our deeds and actions are also few in quantity and quality and the Examiner of these deeds (Allah) is Far-sighted and Deep-sighted. If He converts our bad deeds into good deeds and grants us salvation, it is not difficult for Him.

In the same way consider what happened to Hazrat Daood (AS) who was a vicegerent of Exalted Allah. On account of a little lapse on his part he (AS) wept so much that grass grew on the surface of the earth because of the profuse tears that fell on the earth from his wet eyes. He (AS) prayed to Allah, saying :

> O Allah ! Will you not show mercy on my humbleness and weeping ? Allah's reply was : O Daood you forgot your sin but remembered your weeping. His repentance was therefore, accepted after forty days and, according to some after forty years.

Also consider the incident of Hazrat Yunus (Jonah AS). Once he (AS) expressed anger for which there was no occasion. He (AS) therefore, remained imprisoned in the belly of a fish under water for forty days. In this condition and in the

darkness of the belly of the fish he remained glorifying his Lord's name all days and nights.

لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا أَنْتَ سُبْحَانَكَ إِنِّي كُنْتُ مِنَ الظَّالِمِيْنَ . (سورة الانبياء : ٨٧)

> There is no god except you, you the Glorified one. I have indeed been a wrong doer. (21:87)

When the Angels heard his glorification they told Exalted Allah that it was a familiar voice coming from some familiar place. Allah replied that it was His servant Yunus (AS) whom He had imprisoned in the belly of a fish.

All the Angels interceded for him (AS) only then he was released from this prison.

Despite all this punishment Allah changes his name from Yunus (AS) to Zunnoon, the fisherman, on account of the prison that was the belly of a fish. Allah has mentioned this incident in a verse of the Holy Qur'an :

فَالْتَقَمَهُ الْحُوْتُ وَهُوَ مُلِيْمٌ . فَلَوْ لَا أَنَّهُ كَانَ مِنَ الْمُسَبِّحِيْنَ . لَلَبِثَ فِيْ بَطْنِهِ إِلٰى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُوْنَ . (سورة الصافات: ١٤٢-١٤٤)

> Then the fish swallowed him while he was blame worthy. And had he not been one of those who glorify. (Allah), he would have tarried in its belly till the day of Resurrection. (37 : 142 - 144)

Thereafter, Allah has mentioned His bounties and grants in this way :

لَوْلَا أَنْ تَدَارَكَهُ نِعْمَةٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِ لَنُبِذَ بِالْعَرَاءِ وَهُوَ مَذْمُوْمٌ . (سورة الحاقة. ٤٩)

> Had it not been that favour from His Lord had reached him he surely would have beeen cast into the wilderness, condemned. (68 : 49).

So reflect attentively on this trend of Exalted Allah and remain in fear of it.

Following this track come to the Holy Prophet (PBUH) the beloved of Exalted Allah and the best of all the creation. See how Allah has addressed him (PBUH):

فَاسْتَقِمْ كَمَا أُمِرْتَ وَمَنْ تَابَ مَعَكَ وَلَا تَطْغَوْا إِنَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ. (سورة هود : ١١٢)

> So be steadfast as you have been commanded and those who turn (to Allah) with you and do not transgress (the limits). Surely He sees what you do. (11 : 112)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said :

شيّبتني هود وأخواتها

> The Surah Hood and other surahs like it have made me old.

There are also many other verses in the Holy Qur'an :

وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لِذَنْبِكَ وَسَبِّحْ بِحَمْدِ رَبِّكَ بِالْعَشِيِّ وَالْإِبْكَارِ . (سورة المؤمن : ٥٥)

> And ask forgiveness for your sins and hymn the praise of your Lord at fall of night and in the early hours. (40 : 55)

Allah has mentioned forgiveness and salvation as a charitable grant.

وَوَضَعْنَا عَنْكَ وِزْرَكَ الَّذِىْ اَنْقَضَ ظَهْرَكَ . (سورة الم نشرح : ٢-٣)

And we have eased you of your burden which weighed down on your back. (94 : 2-3)

He said at another place :

لِيَغْفِرَ لَكَ اللّٰهُ مَا تَقَدَّمَ مِنْ ذَنْبِكَ وَمَا تَاَخَّرَ. (سورة الفتح: ٢)

That Allah may forgive you of your sins, that which is past and that which is to come. (48:2)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) himself remained occupied the whole night offering optional prayers until his feet swelled. The Noble companions (RAA) once asked the Holy Prophet (PBUH) :

O Prophet of Allah ! Why do you put in so much worship, when Exalted Allah has forgiven all your past and future sins?

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) replied to their question, saying :

اَفلا اُكون عبدًا شكوراً .

Should I not be a grateful servant?

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in another Hadith :

لو انّى وعيسٰى اُو خِذنا بما كسبت هاتان لَعُذّبنا عذابًا لم يعذّبه احداً مـن العالمين(واشار با صبعيه).

If I (PBUH) and Hazrat Eesa (Christ - AS) were taken to task for our these deeds (pointing to something with his two fingers), we would have been punished with a punishment with

which none else was punished in the whole world.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) used to remain occupied the whole night with praying, weeping and making supplications. He used to say :

أعوذ بعفوك من عقابك ورضاك من سخطك وأعوذ بك منك لا أحصى ثناءً عليك انت كما اثنيت على نفسك .

I take refuge with your forgiveness from your punishment and with your pleasure from your wrath. I take refuge with you from yourself. I cannot praise you as you have praised yourself.

The Noble Companions (RAA) are the best section of this Ummah yet when they indulged in a little recreation among themselves the following verse was revealed :

أَلَمْ يَأْنِ لِلَّذِينَ آمَنُوا أَنْ تَخْشَعَ قُلُوبُهُمْ لِذِكْرِ اللهِ وَمَا نَزَلَ مِنَ الْحَقِّ.
(سورة الحديد: ١٦)

Has not the time come for those who believe that their hearts should become anxious to submit to the truth that has been revealed? (57:16)

This Ummah of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the last favoured Ummah, yet many threats of punishment and torment have been held out to them Hazrat Yunus bin Ubaid (RA) used to say :

When a man's hand is cut off as a punishment in this world for stealing only five Dirhams, you should not feel secure from Allah's punishment in the Hereafter.

So I pray to Exalted Allah to deal with us with His great mercy and sympathy. Amen!

A Few Events Concerning Hope

It is رجاء (Hope) that people should be talking frequently about Allah's infinite mercy to the best of their ability. It is not possible, indeed, for anyone to reach the endless field of His mercy. His mercy is so vast and extensive that He forgives and nullifies in a few moments seventy year's infidelity. He has said in the Holy Qur'an :

قُلْ لِّلَّذِيْنَ كَفَرُوْا اِنْ يَّنْتَهُوْا يُغْفَرْلَهُمْ مَّا قَدْ سَلَفَ ج (سورة الانفال:٣٨)

> Tell those who disbelieve that if they cease (to disbelieve), that which is past will be forgiven. (8:38)

Consider what happened to the magicians of Pharaoh. They had assembled to support Pharaoh against Prophet Moosa (Moses - AS) and had come, swearing by Pharaoh's honour. Notwith-standing this when they uttered with sincerity آمنا برب العالمين (We believe in the Lord of the worlds), their repentance was accepted by Allah at once. All their past sins were forgiven and the pleasing tidings of eternal Paradise was given to them. They had been honoured with the status of martyrs. This favour was shown to a group that was drowned in open disbelief. Their sin of disbelief was wiped off in a moment after they believed in Allah's oneness. Now imagine the reward and great favour which Exalted Allah shall bestow on such of His servants who devote their entire lives to Allah's oneness and sovereignty and Lordship.

The story of the People of the cave is also very instructive and is full of morals.

They spent all their lives in disbelief and shirk (polytheism) but at last they turned believers of their confession, as reported in the Holy Qur'an :

رَبُّنَا رَبُّ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَنْ نَدْعُوَا مِنْ دُونِهِ إِلَٰهًا لَقَدْ قُلْنَا إِذًا شَطَطًا. (سورة الكهف: ١٤)

Our Lord is the Lord of the heavens and the earth. We call to no god beside Him, for then we should be uttering an excess. (18 : 14)

This confession of belief of theirs was accepted at once and they were treated with honour and grace.

Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

وَنُقَلِّبُهُمْ ذَاتَ الْيَمِينِ وَذَاتَ الشِّمَالِ . (سورة الكهف: ١٨)

And we turned them over to the right and to the left. (18:18)

And addressing His beloved Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) Allah further said in the Holy Qur'an :

لَوِ اطَّلَعْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ لَوَلَّيْتَ مِنْهُمْ فِرَارًا وَلَمُلِئْتَ مِنْهُمْ رُعْبًا. (١٨:١٨)

If you had observed them closely you would have certainly turned away from them in flight out of awe of them. (18 : 18)

Moreover, Exalted Allah bestowed honour on the dog that followed them and mentioned it in His Book. Allah made the dog their companion in this world and will raise it up in the Hereafter along with the people of the Cave and they will all enter Paradise with due honour and welcome.

Now consider that all this mercy and favour were shown to the dog for the only reason that it had accompanied the people of the cave by taking only a few steps. The people of the cave had also believed in Allah's oneness and acquired knowledge about him only a few days ago. But for this they had no worship and good deeds to the credit in the past. Now decide for yourself how mercifully and generously Exalted Allah shall deal with a servant who has been a believer in Allah's oneness and Lordship for the last seventy years with a desire that if he was granted another seventy thousand years to live in the world, he would devote these additional years also to the worship and service of Allah?

Hazrat Nooh (Noah - AS) had prayed to Allah for the ruin of the sinners of his Ummah, but he was severely admonished to this prayer of ruin and destruction.

Hazrat Moosa (AS) was also reprimanded about his curse for قارون (Korah) and he (AS) was asked to explain why he turned down Korah's request. Allah said, by His oath that if the man had made a prayer to Him. He must have granted his prayer.

Exalted Allah expressed His displeasure with Hazrat Yunus (Jonah - AS) for his expression of sadness at Allah's action in raising and then drying in a moment the gourd plant, although he (AS) had felt no regret when his curse brought divine punishment on millions of men of his Ummah.

Allah's displeasure and anger also once fell on the Holy Prophet (PBUH). It occurs in the narrative, that once he (PBUH) entered the sacred Mosque through Bani Shaibah and found a group of the Noble Companions (RAA) laughing there. He (PBUH) objected to this and asked them not to laugh again. After saying this he (PBUH) went to the Black stone in the Ka'bah. When he came back he (PBUH) said to them :

> Hazrat Jibraël (AS) came to me just now and conveyed to me Allah's complaint that I have made His servants despair of Him, and that I should tell them that Allah is very Forgiving and Merciful.

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith (cited earlier) that Exalted Allah is more Merciful to His servants than a kind mother is to her child. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in another Hadith :

> ان لله تعالىٰ مائُة رحمةٍ فَواحدةٌ منها قسمها بين الجن والإنس والبهائم فبها يتعاطفون وبها يتراحمون وادّخر منها تسعةً وتسعين لنفسه ليَرحم بها عبادَهُ يومَ القيامة .

> The mercy of Exalted Allah stands divided in one hundred parts. He has distributed one part thereof among Jinn and men and animals. They sympathise with, and show kindness to, one another with this (one part) of mercy. Exalted Allah has retained the remaining ninety-nine parts for Himself to show mercy to His servants on the Day of Judgement.

Now consider how Exalted Allah has distributed, out of only one part of His mercy, so many bounties, gifts and grants, viz.

> The blessing of knowledge about Him, our birth among the favoured Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), maintained us on the belief of Alh-e-Sunnah wal-Jama'at and has granted many other external and internal bounties.

Apart from these, it is hoped that in future also He shall complete his favours on His servants. When He has been kind from the very beginning, it is hoped that He shall, by His mercy, accomplish His grants. There is full hope that you shall receive a large share out of the reserved ninety nine parts of Allah's mercy.

We should now pray to Almighty Allah that may He by His mercy, fulfil our hopes and expectations - Amen.

PRINCIPLE 3

ABOUT PROMISES AND THREATS.

By a Promise is meant the promise of reward and return. This promise is made to the righteous people.

A threat is also a promise to inflict punishment for sins on the sinners and the disobedient. In this context I am mentioning below five states of the Hereafter.

1) Death (2) The Grave (3) The Day of Resurrection (4) Paradise (5) Hell

(1) DEATH

I am mentioning two cases of death.

Hazrat Ibn Shibramah (RA) has stated that once he went along with Imam Sha'bi (RA) to a patient to inquire about his healt. The man was then going through the throes of death. A man sitting near him was dictating him the Kalimah (لا اله الا الله). Hazrat Sha'bi (RA) advised the man to dictate the Kalimah in low voice. The patient said: I must recite the Kalimah whether you dictate it to me or not. Then he recited the following verse of the Holy Qur'an :

--- وَاَلْزَمَهُمْ كَلِمَةَ التَّقْوٰى وَكَانُوْا اَحَقَّ بِهَا --- (سورة الفتح:٢٦)

and (-- Allah) imposed on them the word of Taqwa righteousness), for they were worthy of it. (48 : 26)

on hearing this Hazrat Sha'bi (RA) said.

الحمد لله الّذى نجا صاحبنا

Praise be to that Allah who saved our friend.

The other case related to a dying pupil of Hazrat Fuzail bin Iyaz (RA). The Shaikh (RA) sat down near his dying pupil and began to recite Surah Ya-Sin (يآس). The pupil requested his Ustaz to stop his recitation. The Shaikh (RA) stopped his recitation. After a little pause he (RA) began to dictate the Kalimah لا اله الا لله. The pupil said (God forbid), I shall not recite it. I feel disgusted with it. After saying this the pupil breathed his last.

The Shaikh Hazrat Fuzail bin Iyaz (RA) was so much aggrieved at this sad event that he (RA) remained weeping for forty days in his house at the fate of his pupil. One day the Shaikh saw his pupil in a dream that he was being dragged towards Hell - Fire. He asked the pupil to inform him why Glorious Allah seized his belief, even though he was the most intelligent of all his pupils. The pupil told the Shaikh that it was due to three vices in him :

1. Backbiting, telling one thing to his friends and another thing to his Ustaz.

2. Malice. He harboured in his heart malice against his class-mates.

3. He used to drink wine from time to time as a medicine as advised by some physician.

May Exalted Allah protect us from His wrath and punishment.

It is also necessary to consider the conditions of two other men at the time of their death.

When the time of death of Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (RA) approached, he turned his eyes towards the heaven and recited this verse of the Holy Qur'an :

لِمِثْلِ هٰذَا فَلْيَعْمَلِ الْعٰمِلُوْنَ ○ (سورة الصافات : ٦١)

Let the workers work for the like of this (reward and favour) (37 : 61)

Hazrat Malik bin Dinar (RA) has related the state of another man : When a neighbour of the Shaikh was about to die he (RA) visited him. The dying man said to the Shaikh : O Malik, there are two mountains of fire before me which I am being forced to climb up. Hazrat Malik bin Dinar (RA) asked the people of his household about that man. They informed Hazrat Malik (RA) that he was a trader of grain and had two measures for weighting grain, one for selling grain and the other for purchasing it. Hazrat Malik (RA) called for both the measures and broke them by striking one against the other, and then he (RA) inquired of the man about his condition. He replied that he ws undergoing a worse state of hardship.

(2) The Grave

As for the conditions in the grave, the accounts of two persons deserve consideration.

A saintly man has said that he saw in a dream Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) after his death, and asked him :

O Abu Abdullah ! What happened to you after death ? Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) turned aside his face and said : It is not the time that I should be addressed by my patronymic name. The saint then said :

O Sufyan! How are you ? Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) recited the following couplets by way of a reply :

نظرت الى ربى عيانا فقال لى — هنئاً رضائى عنك يأبن سعيدٍ
لقد كنت قواما اذا الليل قد دجا — ببصرة مشتاق وقلب عميدٍ
فدونك فاختر اى قصر تريده — وزرنى فانى عنك غير بعيدٍ

The couplets mean:

After death I saw my Lord (Allah) quite clearly. Then He said to me : O Abu Saeed ! congratulation for you on My pleasure (with you). You remained awake at nights with longing eyes and with a fully attentive heart. You may now choose for you whichever apartment of Paradise you desire, and visit Me as frequently as you desire, because I am now very close to you.

The following is the account of another fellow. A righteous man saw him in a dream. The colour of the man had changed and both his hands were tied round his neck. When the righteous man inquired of the man about his condition, he recited this couplet :

تولّٰى زمانٌ لعبنا به — وهذا زَمان بنا يلعب

The time has gone away when we used to play
with it and now we have entered upon a time
when the time is playing with us.

The following are the accounts of two other persons:

The son of a righteous man had fallen a martyr in some battle. The righteous father, never saw his martyred son in a dream. He, however, saw him in a dream on the night in which Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (RA) passed away. The father asked the son :

O my son, had you not died?

The son replied: Not at all O my father ! I had fallen a martyr. I am alive near my Allah and I am provided with my sustenance. The father said : How have you come here today? The martyred son replied: It was announced among the inmates of the heavens that all the Siddiqs (Truthful men) and the martyrs should join the funeral prayer of Hazrat Umar bin Abdul Aziz (RA). I had therefore come down to join the funeral prayer and have now called on you to bid you Salam (Glory to Allah!).

Hisham bin Hassan (RA) has related the other event, saying :

A young son of mine had died. When on one night I saw him in a dream I found marks of old age on his face. When I asked him the cause of this, he said : When such and such man came to us Hell began to roar out of an extreme spell of rage. The dread of this terrible roar made all of us old.

نعوذ با لله الرحيم من العذاب الاليم

(3) The Day Of Resurrection

The third state is that of the Day of Resurrection. It is enough to replace on the following verse of the Holy Qur'an about this terrible state .

يَوْمَ نَحْشُرُ الْمُتَّقِينَ إِلَى الرَّحْمَانِ وَفْدًا ○ وَنَسُوقُ الْمُجْرِمِينَ إِلَى جَهَنَّمَ وِرْدًا ○ (سورة مريم: ٨٥-٨٦)

On the Day when We shall gather the righteous near the Merciful (Allah) in the form of a delegation; and shall drive guilty into Hell weary with thirst. (19 : 85-86)

While rising from his grave, some will find before him blessings like golden crown Buraq (a heavenly riding animal) and costly garments to wear. After putting on this crown on his head and the heavenly garments on his body and sitting on the Buraq he will proceed to Paradise. As a matter of honour and respect he shall not be suffered to walk on foot.

While rising from his grave some will find before him Allah's torment in the form of the bailiffs of Hell. Instead of walking on foot he will be dragged into Hell face down, hand-cuffed and fettered with chains - (العياذبا لله)

I have heard an scholar narrating this Hadith from the Holy Prophet (PBUH)

إذا كان يوم القيامة يخرج قوم من قبورهم . هم نُجُبٌ يركبونها لها اجنحة خضر فتطير بهم في عرصات القيامة حتّى إذا أتوا على حيطان الجنة فاذا رأتهم الملائكة قال بعضهم لبعض من هولآء فيقولون ما ندرى . لعلهم من امّةِ محمّدٍ صلى الله عليه وسلم.

فيأتيهم بعض الملائكة فيقول من انتم؟ فيقولون نحن من أمّة محمد صلّى الله عليه وسلم.

فتقول الملائكة هل حوسبتم؟ فيقولون لا. فتقول الملائكة هل وزنتم؟ فيقولون لا.

فتقول الملائكة هل قرأتم كتبكم؟ فيقولون لا.

فتقول الملائكة ارجعوا فكل ذلك ورائكم.

فيقولون هل اعطيتمونا شيأ فتحاسب عليه.

وفى خبر آخر ما ملكنا شيا فنعدل أو نجور ولكن عبدنا ربنا

حتى دعانا فاجبناه فينادى مناد : صدق عبادى ما على المحسنين من سبيل.

وا لله غفور رحيم .

On the Day of Judgement a group will come out of their graves. They will find there their conveyance (of animals) with green wings. The riders shall get on them and the animals will fly with their riders across the plain of Resurrection, till they reach the walls of Paradise. Then some of the Angels will ask: Who are they? The reply will be : We do not know. They are perhaps from among the Ummah of Muhammad (PBUH).

Then some Angels will approach them and ask them who you are . They shall reply : We are from the Ummah of Muhammad (PBUH). Then the Angels will ask : Have you been reckoned : They will reply : No. Then the Angels will ask : Have your deeds been weighed? They shall reply no. Then the Angels will ask : Have you read the Register of your deeds? They will reply no. Then the Angels shall say : Then go back, because all these

actions have been left behind. They will reply : Had you given in anything for which you shall subject us to reckoning? According to another Hadith they shall reply : We did not own anything in the world that we could do justice or do wrong. We worshipped our Lord until He called us here, so we came here. In the mean time a voice will announce : Our servants have told the truth. There will be no blame and reckoning for those who live in the world in sincerity, in obedience and do good. Allah is indeed Merciful and Forgiving.

Allah's announcement contained in this verse of the Holy Qur'an is also worth considering with due attention:

اَفَمَنْ يُّلْقٰى فِي النَّارِ خَيْرٌ اَمَّنْ يَّاْتِيْٓ اٰمِنًا يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ . (سورة حٰمٓ السجدة. ٤٠)

Is he who is hurled into the Fire better or he who comes safe and secure on the Day of Judgement? (41:40)

Now reflect coolly on the good luck and the high status of that person who will not be frightened nor distracted in the least to see the hectic confusion and commotion of the Day of Judgement but will remain in total peace and tranquillity.

May Allah, by His mercy, include us all in the company of such righteous person - Amen !

Paradise And Hell

It is necessary in respect of these two topics to reflect on the following two verses of the Holy Qur'an:

First Verse

وَسَقَاهُمْ رَبُّهُمْ شَرَابًا طَهُوْرًا ○ اِنَّ هٰذَا كَانَ لَكُمْ جَزَاءً وَّكَانَ سَعْيُكُمْ مَّشْكُوْرًا. (سورة الدهر: ٢١-٢٢)

Their Lord shall quench their thirst with a pure drink. (It will be said to them:) This indeed, is the reward for you. Your endeavour has found acceptance (with Us) (76 : 21-22)

The foregoing is a description of the inmates of Paradise. The following verse contains a description of the inmates of Hell

رَبَّنَا اَخْرِجْنَا مِنْهَا فَاِنْ عُدْنَا فَاِنَّا ظٰلِمُوْنَ . قَالَ اخْسَئُوْا فِيْهَا وَلَا تُكَلِّمُوْنِ.
(سورة المؤمنون : ١٠٧- ١٠٨)

Our Lord ! Bring in forth from hence : If we return (to evil) we shall be wrong - doers. (Allah) shall say Begone therein and do not speak to Me. (23 : 107-108)

It occurs in the narratives that at that time they will be turned into dogs and will begin to bark like dogs. God forbid. May Exalted Allah save us, by His mercy, from such painful and disgracing punishment.

Anyway, Hazrat Yahya bin Ma'az Razi (RA) has said and quite rightly:

"I do not know which of the two punishments is worse-being debarred from Paradise or being thrust into Hell. It is quite impossible to resort to patience in the matter (of deprivation) of Paradise and (entry into) Hell.

Even so, to be deprived of Paradise is much better than burning in the Fire of Hell for ever and ever. The situation would have been easier if the punishment of Hell had been temporary. Who has the courage and power to endure thus everlasting torment of Hell? None, of course !

That is why Hazrat Eesa (AS) has said:

The very thought of everlasting torment has smashed to pieces the hearts of the God-fearing men.

Someone mentioned to Hazrat Hasan (RAA) about a man named Hannad who will get out of Hell after enduring its torment for one thousand years. At the time of emergence from Hell he will be rehearsing the words يا حنان (O merciful!) يا منان (O Generous!)

Hazrat Hasan (RAA) said, weeping : I wish I had been Hannad. The people present there felt astonished at this strange desire of Hazrat Hasan (RAA). He (RAA) replied : Are you ignorant? Hannad will one day get out of the torment of Hell instead of burning therein eternally. Is it not an enviable success?

I now say that the entire issue revolves round one point and that is the risk of "being deprived of the blessing of Eeman." This is a point the thought of which breaks the backs of men, withers the bloom of the faces. The very thought of this cuts the hearts and melts the brains of men and those who weep shed tears of blood. It is this fear that weighs heavy on the hearts of God-fearing men who constantly remain tearful and shuddering with horror at this thought.

Some saintly men have said that there are three categories of grief :

1. The grief about worship that Allah may or may not accept it.

2. The grief about sins that they may or may not be forgiven.

3. The grief about Eeman (Faith) that it should -God forbid- be taken away.

Many sincere men of insight maintain that in fact there is only one overwhelming grief and that revolves round the risk of seizure of Eeman (Faith). All other forms of grief, worries and anxieties are insignificant which can be dispensed with in one way or another.

Hazrat Yusuf bin Asbat (RA) has related that once he passed one night with Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA). He saw that the Shaikh (RA) passed the whole night in weeping and sobbeing bitterly. Hazrat Yusuf (RA) said to him : Is all this weeping "due" to sins? The Shaikh (RA) picked up a piece of straw and said: Sins are lighter than this (pointing to the piece of straw). The grief relates to a fear lest the very wealth of Islam, should be seized from me (i.e. Eeman, the essence of Islam).

We, therefore, pray to Exalted Allah that He may not impose on us some hardship and calamity, may complete His blessings on us, maintain us on Islam and let us die on Eeman (Faith). He is ارحم الراحمین (the Most Merciful of all).

I have explained in my book Ih-ya-ul-Uloom the meaning and causes of سوء خاتمه (Bad end of life). One may refer to relevant chapter in that book. It is not appropriate to deal with this topic here. It is necessary to read and understand this brief description given in this book. It is possible that by the

grace of Allah, this may become a means to attain the success and prosperity of both the worlds.

You may now put a question as to which path - the path of Fear or that of Hope - should be taken? I would say in reply that it is necessary to take the path lying in between these paths i.e., the middle path. This is because our elder saints and Godly men have said that if the hold of hope becomes predominant on anyone he will enter the misguided sect of the Marjian[1] on the the other hand, if the hold of fear becomes predominant on anyone he will enter the misguided sect of the "Huroori[2]" or the 'Kharijites" خوارج

In other words it is not right to lean to one of the two sides. As already emphasized earlier, the safe and appropriate course is to take the middle path on which Fear and Hope are tempered, one by the other to afford a safe and secure passage for the traveller on the path of Deen.

In fact real Hope and real Fear are closely related and cannot be separated from each other. That is why it has been said that those who have been overwhelmed with Fear stand in need of Hope and those who have been overwhelmed with Hope stand in need of Fear.

One may put this question : Can one aspect, say, Fear attain predominance over the other aspect Hope or conversely Hope over Fear?

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[1] A misguided sect the members of which maintain that a Muslim is secure from all punishments despite his sins and vices.

[2] A misguided sect holding the extreme view that by committing a sin a Muslim becomes a Kafri (unbeliever)

The answer to this question is that predominance of Fear over Hope is suitable for a person who has robust and sound health on the other hand predominance of Hope over Fear is suitable for a person who is weak in health and is going through the last stage of his life. This is based on a Divine Hadith which says :

أنا عند المنكسرة قلوبهم من أجلي .

I remain with those whose heart are broken for fear of Me.

So, in such a situation the predominance of Hope is quite appropriate, as during the state of sound health and fitness a state of fear is the predominating disposition of a man's mind and heart. That is why it has been declared in the holly Qur'an :

لَا تَخَافُوا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوا . (سورة حم السجدة : ٣٠)

Neither fear nor grieve. (41 : 30)

One may put this question : There are many narratives in which it occurs that one should entertain a good opinion about Exalted Allah. (Does this not imply that only Hope and not Fear should be entertained about Allah? - (translation)

The answer to this question is that the injunction of entertaining good opinion also implies that a man should always refrain from sins and disobedience and be afraid of Allah's punishment and he should try his best to obey Allah in all matters.

It is necessary on this occasion to understand a fine point which relates to the difference between رجاء (Hope) and امنيه (wish).

رجاء (Hope) is built on some basis but تمنی آرزو (wish) has no such basis; it is concerned only with thinking and imagination. For example, a farmer works hard to prepare and cultivate his field. In the harvesting season he collects the harvested grain in his corn-stock. Then he hopes that the harvest will yield about so many tons of grain. This is "hope" in the real sense because it has a firm basis.

On the other hand, there is a man who spends the entire year in idleness does nothing to prepare his field to cultivate it, yet he hopes to harvest a good crop at the time of harvesting. This "hope" is baseless and nothing more than mere wishful thinking.

On the same analogy, if a servant of Allah does his best to obey and worship Allah and saves himself from sins and disobedience and then says : I hope that Exalted Allah will by His mercy, accept from me this little service and devotion and ignore if there has been any slackness on my part and make good, if there has been any omission in my worship will grant me good reward and forgive me my sins. If a man entertains a good opinion about Allah in this way, it will be "Hope" in the true sense of the word. On the other hand, there is a servant of Allah who is neglectful of his duties towards Allah commits sins does not mind at all Allah's pleasure or displeasure or the promises of reward and punishment. Then this man says : I hope that Exalted Allah shall forgive me and grant me salvation. Such false hope shall be regarded as mere wishful thinking and baseless aspiration which will afford no benefit to the person concerned.

If he calls such thinking as حسن ظن (good opinion about Allah), this is a misunderstanding and delusion on his part.

This principle becomes fully clarified from a Hadith in which the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said :

الكَيِّسُ من دان نفسَهُ وعمِل لِما بعد الموت والعاجز من اتبع نفسه هواها وتمنى على الله.

Wise is that man how exercises control over his self and has worked for the next world after death. Foolish is that man who follows his sensual desires and builds hopes on Allah.

Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) has said that there are many men who are always hoping for forgiveness in the Hereafter but leave the world empty-handed without any good deeds. Even they claim that they entertain "good opinion" about their Creator, Allah such men are liars. If they had really formed a "good opinion" about Allah, they would have done some good deeds. Thereafter, the Shaikh recited this verse of the Holy Qur'an :

فَمَنْ كَانَ يَرْجُوْا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهٖ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا . (سورة الكهف: ١١٠)

So whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do good deeds --- (18 : 110)

Then he (RA) recited this verse:

ذٰلِكُمْ ظَنُّكُمُ الَّذِىْ ظَنَنْتُمْ بِرَبِّكُمْ اَرْدٰكُمْ فَاَصْبَحْتُمْ مِّنَ الْخَاسِرِيْنَ. (سورة حٰمٓ السجدة : ٢٣)

It is your opinion which you formed about your Lord that ruined you, and you became (on that account) among the losers. (41 : 23)

Hazrat Ja'far Zab'ee (RA) has said that once he saw Hazrat Abu Maisarah 'Abid (RA) that his ribs wre protruding out on account of his sever striving (مجاهده) and worship. I said to him : May Allah have mercy on you. Allah's mercy is infinite. Why then dio you torture yourself so much? This offended him and he retorted saying : Have you seen in me any

symptoms of dejection and despondency ? It is true without any shade of doubt that Allah's mercy is very close to the righteous. on hearing this reply Hazrat Ja'far (RA) began to weep.

Now what do you think about the Prophets of Allah (A.S.) the friends of Allah (RA) and the saintly men of the Ummah who exerted themselves so severely in worshipping Allah and took all possible care to refrain from sins? Had they not formed a good opinion about Exalted Allah ? No, it is they, more than anyone else in the universe, who had "good opinion" about their Lord and had stronger belief and firmer faith than you and we, in the vastness of Allah's mercy and in the generosity of His forgiveness. They, however, also knew very well that his imaginary "good opinion" about Allah, not backed by sincere exertion and striving in the path of Allah, is nothing but a deception and wishful thinking. So grasp this important point very carefully and take a lesson from the conditions and practices of these righteous men of the Ummah.

SECTION 2

To sum up, in order to create in yourself the attributes of Hope and Fear, it is necessary for you to imagine the enormity of Allah's mercy which prevails upon His wrath and encompasses the entire universe. You should remember that Mercy of Exalted Allah that he created you in the favoured Ummah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Above all you should imagine His infinite compassion, and unlimited generosity and sympathy. It is also necessary for you to imagine that He revealed for your guidance His Book, the Holy Qur'an which the began with the sacred words بسم الله الرحمان الرحيم (in the name of Allah the Most Merciful, the Compassionate). You should also remember His external and internal bounties which He has bestowed upon you without

any intercession and without any previous worship and devotion put in for Him by you.

Apart from this, you have also to imagine His greatness, sublimity, capability, awe, His anger and wrath etc. against which nothing in the earth and the heavens can stand.. Think also of your indifference and carelessness towards the Hereafter despite its risks and horrors, our countless sins and vices, of the fact that He is fully aware of all your deeds movements and activities your open and hidden defects and faults. Also think of Allah's promises for rewards and recompenses, the reality of which is beyond man's power to grasp, and His painful punishment and severe threats which man has no courage and capacity of endure.

Apart from all this, it is not necessary to imagine Allah's punishment as opposed to His mercy and kindness, the transgression by yourself of the prescribed limits of right conduct, deviation from the right path, the sins and crimes committed. This trend of thinking is necessary to create the attribute of Hope and Fear. When you have adorned yourself with these attributes, you will be able to take the middle path, away from the dangerous and fatal paths, valleys of hopelessness and despondence. Now you will be able to enjoy the taste of the mild and mixed syrup of Fear and Hope. In this way neither the cold of Hope will be injurious to you, nor will you be burning in the furnace of Fears. Ultimately you shall reach your goal and find yourself sincerely occupied with worship and devotion . You will now become protected totally from sins and acts of disobedience.

Hazrat Nauf Bukali (RA) has said that when Nauf imagines Paradise his longing for Paradise increases with Hope and when he imagines Hell his sleep disappears on account of Fear.

Thus, afte
Fear, you have become enlisted among such favoured servants of Allah as find a reference in this verse of the Holy Qur'an :

إِنَّهُمْ كَانُوا يُسَارِعُونَ فِي الْخَيْرَاتِ وَيَدْعُونَنَا رَغَبًا وَّرَهَبًا وَّ كَانُوا لَنَا خَاشِعِينَ .(سورة الأنبياء : ٩٠)

They used to rush up to good deeds and they used to call upon Us in longing and in fear. (21:90)

Now you have, by Allah's mercy, crossed this risky valley عقبة البواعث (the valley of urge and impetus). You have received in the world the purity of the heart and the sweetness of worship. you shall receive a great reward in the Hereafter.

May Exalted Allah by His mercy grant us all righteousness and right conduct in all our affairs and activities.

وهو أرحم الراحمين واجود الأجودين ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلى العظيم .

Chapter Six

عقبة ا لقوادح (The Valley Of Factors Ruining Worship)

قوادح (QAWADIH) consists of those harmful objects and activities that destroy acts of worship and devotion.

When you have, by Allah's mercy, taken the right and straight path of Deen, it is necessary for you to protect your good deeds from being wasted and nullified. I have already advised that there are two factors, namely show and ostentation (ریاء) and pride (عجب) that ruin acts of worship and devotion.

The First Qadih - Ostentation (ریاء)

It is very necessary to attain اخلاص (sincerity)for two reasons.

1. A good deed is acceptable in the sight of Exalted Allah only when it has been done with sincerity and the doer

becomes entitled to abundant reward. If the act is not based on sincerity it is rejected and condemned. The reward, if any, goes waste. There is a well known Divine Hadith, containing the following exposition in the words of the Holy Prophet (PBUH).

> Exalted Allah has said : I am the Most Affluent and Wantless of all, and have no partner, whatsoever. If a man does some good deed and allots a share in it to a partner then My share may also the allotted to that partner. Only that deed is acceptable to Me which has been done for My sake exclusively.

It also occurs in the narratives that when on the Day of Judgement a servant of Allah will ask for reward for his deeds, it will be said to him : Had I not granted you prominent and spacious places in the assemblies of the world? Had I not made you in the world Makhdoom (Masters)? Had I not provided you facilities in your business in the world? had you not received honour and respect in the world? (In other words all your deeds had been recompensed in the world).

This points out the danger of doing something without اخلاص (sincerity). Absence of sincerity may involve many other vices and risks.

2. The other reason for refraining from "show (ostentation)" (ریاء) is that it involves two types of disgrace and calamities.

1. One disgrace is hidden and the servants of Allah are censured in the presence of the Angels. it occurs in the narratives that when the angels rise up with the good deeds of servant with joy and pleasure, Exalted Allah

commands them to throw away those deeds into sijjin (hell) because the deeds were not done for Allah. Thus, the deeds as well as their doers are both put to shame and disgrace.

2. The other disgrace is open and visible, which will take place on the Day of Judgement in the presence of the entire assembly of the creation. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said that a man addicted to the vice of ostentation will be called on the Day of Judgement by four titles i.e., (i) "O, disbeliever", (2) O, sinner", (3) O, imposter, and (4) O, loser. He will be told : All your efforts have gone waste along with their reward and recompense. To day you have no share at all. Go away and demand your reward from those for whom you did all these deeds. O, you imposter.

It occurs in a narrative that on the Day of Judgement an announcer will announce and the entire creation assembled there shall hear the announcement :

> Those who used to put in worship in the world for others should demand their reward from those for whom they worshipped. I do not accept a deed in which someone else was made a partner with Me.

Ostentation (ریاء) or this show business involves two calamities. Firstly, loss of Paradise. It is narrated from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) that Paradise will say : I have been forbidden for every miser and impostor.

This sacred Hadith has two meanings.

(i) The word miser has been used for that person who is so miserly as not to utter even the Kalimah لا اله الا

الله (There is no god but Allah). That is he does not utter the Kalimah with the sincerity of intention.

By an impostor is meant that imposter of the worst type who makes a show of his Eeman (belief) and Tauheed (Oneness of Allah) by resorting to hypocrisy. (In this interpretation there is an indication of Hope, that such a fellow can become entitled to paradise by reforming and purifying his intention.

(ii)The other meaning may be that one who fails to protect himself from miserliness and ostentation is in an emminent danger of losing his Eeman and falling into disbelief on account of the curse of these vices. He may become totally debarred from Paradise - God - forbid.

Another calamity for a man of show is that he will become the fuel of Hell. Hazrat Abu Hurairah (RAA) has narrated from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) saying : The first man to be called on the Day of Judgement will be a Hafiz (who has remembered the Qur'an by heart) and Qari (who has learnt the correct art of recitation). A fighter and a martyr in the path of Allah, and a rich man will also be summoned.

Exalted Allah shall say to the Hafiz and Qari : Did I not bestow on you the knowledge of the Book (Qur'an) which I revealed to my Messenger (PBUH)? The Hafiz shall reply in the affirmative. Then he will be asked : What use did you make of that knowledge? He will reply, saying : O my Lord, I used to recite the Holy Qur'an day an night in my prayer. Exalted Allah shall say to him : You have told a lie. you recited the Qur'an with the desire that the people would say that you are a great Alim (scholar) and Qari (reciter of the Holy Qur'an). So have you been called all this as you desired.

Thereafter, the rich man will be summoned in the presence of Exalted Allah and will be asked : Had I not granted you so much wealth and property as to become free from need and poverty? The man will reply in the affirmative. Then he will be asked ' To what use did you put all that money and wealth? He shall reply : O My Allah, I used to help my relations with that wealth and used it for charitable purposes for your sake. Exalted Allah as well as the Angels will say : You have told a lie. Exalted Allah shall say : You did all this with a desire that the people should regard you as a very generous person. You have been regarded as such. Then the Mujahid (fighter in the cause of Allah) and martyr shall be summoned and asked what deeds he did. He shall reply : O Allah ! You commanded me to take part in Jihad (Holy war). In compliance with your command I fought against the disbelievers in your path until I fell a martyr in that Jihad. Exalted Allah and the Angels will say : You are telling a lie. Exalted Allah shall say " You had taken part in the Jihad (Holy war) with the only intention that the people would say that you are very bold and courageous. So you have received this honour in the world thereafter.

Hazrat Abu Hurairah (RAA) further said : The Holy Prophet (PBUH) patted my thigh with his sacred hand and said : O Abu Hurairah (RAA), they will be the first people to become the fuel of Hell-Fire.

Hazrat Ibn Abbas (RAA) has said in a narrative:

سمعت رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم يقول ان النّارَ واهلها يُعجُّون من أهل الرياء قيل يا رسول الله! وكيف تعُجّ النار؟ قال من حرّ النار التى يُعذّبون بها.

I heard the Holy Prophet (PBUH) saying ; Hell and the inmates of Hell will cry on account of the hypocrites. The companions said ; O

Messenger o Allah ! How will hell cry ? He (PBUH) said : They will cry because of the severe heat of the Fire with which the hypocrites will be punished.

Look ! These are very severe calamities from which only those can learn lessons who are men of insight.

THE REALITY OF SINCERITY AND HYPOCRISY. INJUNCTIONS AND THEIR EFFECT ON ACTIONS.

In the opinion of our Ulama اخلاص (sincerity) is of two types - sincerity in actions and sincerity in the intention for reward.

Sincerity in action means that the servant of Allah should try to attain nearness to Allah by his action. His only objective by his actions should be to respect Allah's commands and to obey them. This sincerity is born out of true belief and conviction. The opposite word for it is hypocrisy which means seeking nearness to anyone other than Allah.

My Shaikh (RA) has said that نفاق (Hypocrisy) is entertaining a wrong belief and the hypocrite entertains a wrong belief about Exalted Allah. Such wrong beliefs do not emanate from a man's intention. I have already explained this point at another place.

Sincerity (اخلاص) in the desire or reward and return, is that good deeds and actions should be done for the exclusive purpose of gain in the Hereafter. My Shaikh (RA) has explained the reality of this sincerity by saying that the benefit in the Hereafter of a good deed should be such as may not be easy to reject that deed, but the objective should be the hope to earn benefit of the Hereafter. I have already explained its conditions and limits.

The disciples of Hazrat Eesa (AS) asked the Prophet (AS) about the meaning of pure and sincere action. He (AS) answered, saying : It is to do any good deed exclusively for the sake of Allah, so that the doer should have no intention to seek appreciation from any other person. This contains a suggestion of giving up hypocrisy. A mention of praise or appreciation has been made here, because this is an effective cause of spoiling اخلاص (sincerity).

Hazrat Junaid Bughdadi (RA) has said that sincerity demands that the deeds and actions should be purified from filth and vices. Hazrat Fuzail bin Iyaz (RA) has said that اخلاص (sincerity) means that one should look after and control one's actions after forgetting one's personal interests and considerations.

Apart from these, other statements are available about the meaning of اخلاص (sincerity) and it is not at all necessary to cite them here when I have already explained the reality of اخلاص (sincerity).

When asked about sincerity, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) said in a Hadith :

تقول ربّی اﷲ ثم تستقیم کما اُمِرت

(It is اخلاص) to utter : Allah is my sustaining Lord, and then to remain firm on this (admission).

It means that only Allah should be worshipped instead of adoring the sensual desires, and then the worshipper should remain upright and firm on Allah's worship. There is an indication in this that all interests other than those relating to Allah should be given up. This is true sincerity.

The opposite of اخلاص (sincerity) is ریاء (ostentation), which means that apparently one is doing some deed for the Hereafter but in reality one is doing that deed for some worldly benefit.

There are two kinds of ریاء (ostentation) i.e., ریاء محض (pure ostentation) and ریاء تخلیط (adulterated ostentation). In pure ostentation a man does a good deed only for some worldly benefit. In adulterated ostentation, a man does a good deed with the intention of reaping benefits of the world as well as of the Hereafter. So far, the meanings of sincerity an ostentation have been explained. Next, I am going to mention how sincerity an ostentation affect man's actions.

The effect of sincerity on an action is that any action taken with sincerity turns that action into worship. Sincerity in the demand for reward renders that action entitled to divine acceptance and it becomes a cause of increase in the reward for it. As regards hypocrisy, it spoils the actions and takes man farther from Allah. In such a situation the doer becomes unworthy of the promised rewards and returns.

Some Ulama maintain that knowledgeable scholars (عارفین) are free from pure ostentation but if any vestiges of it are found in their actions they have the effect of laying waste half their reward.

There are some other Ulama who maintain that the 'Arifeen (Knowledgeable scholars) also are sometime found addicted to pure ostentation on account of which half of the additional reward is lost. But in the case of adulterated ostentation only one-fourth of such award is lost.

My Shaikh (RA) is of the opinion that the A'rifeen cannot commit the sin of ostentation intentionally, if they have

any worry about their Hereafter, yet it is possible that they may commit this sin unintentionally through forgetfulness.

A reasonable and sound opinion is that the vice of ostentation (ریاء) renders actions unworthy of being acknowledged and accepted. It is not right to estimate the loss in ratios of one-half and one-fourth.

This is a very lengthy and complicated topic which I have discussed in detail in my book "Ihya-e-Uloomiddin" and the "Secrets of Religious Affairs".

Now one may ask about the value and importance of Ikhlas (sincerity). In what forms of worship Ikhlas is an essential (واجب) duty?

In the opinion of our Ulama there are three types of actions.

1. Those actions in which both types of Ikhlas (sincerity) must be present (i.e. sincerity in the action and sincerity in the demand of reward and return), e.g., these actions are the open forms of worship, e.g., prayers., fasting, Zakat, etc.)

2. There are inner actions, like (توکل) trust in Allah, زهد (Abstention), etc. in which none of the two types of sincerity need to be looked for. These inner forms of devotion belong to the domain of the heart which admits no ostentation. They are based on pure sincerity.

3. The third type consists of those actions in respect of which there is sincerity in the demand for reward and return but there is no sincerity in the actions themselves. These are مباحات (permissible acts), e.g., eating, dressing etc. which are necessary for all activities of life. My

Shaikh (RA) has said that if there is an action relating to a form of real worship which may be performed for Exalted Allah as well as for someone other than Allah then it is necessary that this action should be based on sincerity. As a result of this condition the presence of sincerity will be necessary in most inner forms of devotions.

As for sincerity in the demand of reward and recompense, the Karamiyah Shaikhs say that it is not present in inner forms of worhip as these are known only to Exalted Allah. So such forms of worship do not admit ریاء (ostentation). Thus according to their opinion اخلاص (sincerity) is not necessary even in the act of demanding reward and recompense.

My Shaikh (RA) has said that it is also a form of ostentation to desire from Allah some worldly gain in an inner form of worship. The Shaikh says that it is possible in such a situation that both types of sincerity may be present in most forms of "inner" worship. Thus, presence of sincerity of both types is necessary and essential (واجب) at the time of beginning optional worship.

As for the مباحات (permissible actions) which are taken, prepatory to performance of worship, sincerity is present in desiring rewards and returns but not in the actual actions, as they are not in themselves form worship; they are only actions preparatory to, and helpful in worship.

Up to this place a description has been given of the places and occasions of اخلاص (sincerity) and ریاء (ostentation - hypocrisy). As regards the time of sincerity in actions, it is necessary that sincerity should be simultaneous with actions. It is not possible that an action has been done and sincerity should come thereafter. However, some delay may occur in the

arrival of sincerity in the matter of desire for reward and recompense for an action. In the opinion of some Ulama the last limit of the time for the rise of sincerity in respect of desire for reward is the time of completion of the action. In other words if action has been completed with sincerity it is all right otherwise there is no way of making good the sincerity missed and lost. If ostentation was resorted to in earning some worldly gain then in the opinion of the Karamiyah Shaikhs sincerity may be acquired before the accrual of the benefit aimed, but not thereafter.

According to some Ulama, it is possible to attain sincerity in the matter of obligatory (فرائض) duties till the last breath of life, but this is not possible in the matter of optional duties (نوافل). In explaining this difference between obligatory and optional duties in the matter of sincerity, they have said that a servant of Allah undertakes some obligatory duty in compliance with a command of Exalted Allah. He, therefore, hopes for ease and facility from Allah. This is not possible in the matter of optional duties which a servant discharges of his own free will.

I have mentioned in the foregoing pages the opinions and practices of different Ulama about اخلاص (sincerity) and ریاء (ostentation) for the facility and guidance of the beginners in the path of Deen, as may suit their choice and ease. If a student does not find a remedy for his spiritual disease in one course he may turn to another course which suits him, as these spiritual diseases and objectives differ from man to man.

One may put this question :

Is it necessary for every action that it should have a fixed and defined type of sincerity? According to some Ulama every action requires its own specific form of sincerity or Ikhlas, but in the opinion of some Ulama only one form of

sincerity is sufficient for a group of different items of worship. It is however, the truth that only one phase of Ikhlas is sufficient for our action which consists of many items or parts. For example, one phase of Ikhlas is sufficient both for ablution and prayers, because the accuracy and validity of one depends on the accuracy and validity of the other. That is both are the one and the same.

There is a person who does something for the sake of some benefit of the world or of the hereafter instead of attaining Allah's pleasure thereon. he does not also expect any worldly gain from the people nor does he do that deed for receiving appreciation from other. Is such deed also a case of ريـاء (ostentation)? The answer to this question is in the affirmative, i.e., this is pure and unmixed ostentation. The Ulama say that the decision whether something does or does not involve ostentation depends on the object desired (if it is something other than Allah's pleasure) and not on the authority from which that object is desired. If by a good deed the doer desires to reap some worldly benefit then there is no doubt that it is ostentation, whether the person concerned desires to reap this worldly benefit from Exalted Allah or from a creature. Exalted Allah had said in the Holy Qur'an :

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ حَرْثَ الْاٰخِرَةِ نَزِدْلَهٗ فِىْ حَرْثِهٖ وَمَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ حَرْثَ الدُّنْيَا نُؤْتِهٖ مِنْهَا وَمَالَهٗ فِى الْاٰخِرَةِ مِنْ نَّصِيْبٍ . (سورة الشورى : ٢٠)

Whoso desires the harvest of the Hereafter, We give Him increase in this harvest. And whoso desires the Harvest of the world, We give him thereof and he has no portion in the Hereafter (42 : 20)

The word رياء has been derived from the root word "رؤيه" meaning 'to see'. This is because the doer feels a vicious desire in his heart that the people should see his good deeds.

There is a man who does some good deed with the intention that Exalted Allah may bestow on him some worldly gain with the pious intention that he may not stand in any need of the people but be able to devote himself to worship with concentration, will this conduct be also regarded as ostentation (ریاء)?

The answer to this question is that to refrain from begging others and not to act as beggars indicate contentment and trust in Exalted Allah, it is not due to a desire to increase worldly resource and status.

It is not ostentation (ریاء) to acquire worldly resources and gain for the sake of acquiring ability to devote oneself to worship with due concentration. It should, however, be remembered that the worldly resources and gains should include only such things as are helpful in working for the Hereafter. In such a situation it will not be ostentation to earn worldly gains with good deeds. A good intention is not ostentation.

Good deeds may be done with the intention of seeking respect for the people, that the Ulama and the Shaikhs may deal with the doer with affection and friendliness, to lend support to the people who are on the true path, to counteract the mischief of the people of Bid'at (innovators), to spread knowledge and learning, to encourage the public to do good deeds and the like. If by doing all these good deeds it is not the intention to display one's own dignity and position, then these do not come within the definition of ostentation. They are all welcome deeds and intention. They are all welcome deeds an intentions for the sake of the Hereafter.

Many of my saints and Shaikhs tried to remedy their financial difficulties and distresses by reciting Surah 5. Al-Waqiyah, so that by virtue of this Surah Exalted Allah may

relieve them of their stringency and bestow upon them the capacity of devoting themselves to their worship with peace. I asked some Shaikhs how it was lawful to attain worldly benefits by an action intended for the Hereafter. Their reply to this question was that by the recitation which is an act for the Hereafter, the intention of the reciters of the Surah was ability to pass their lives with contentment and to continue their worship and devotion with due concentration and efficiency. All this being among pious intentions, has nothing to do with ostentation.

You should also know that there are many narratives from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and the noble Companions (RAA) about reciting surah Al-Waqiyah to remedy the scarcity of sustenance and avert the risk of starvation. When the people blamed Hazrat Abdullah bin Masood (RAA) on leaving behind nothing for his children, he (RAA) replied, saying : I have left behind for them Surah Al-Waqiyah. That is why our Ulama and saints continued the practice of reciting this Surah otherwise they did not care a bit for financial ease or poverty in this world. They in fact welcomed the stringency of their financial resources and felt alarmed when financial abundance came to them. They spent most of their time in travelling to far off regions. They considered starvation as their provision for their journeys. This is the view and practice of my Shaikh (RA), other sufis and mine own and of the saints of the past. If the later people have been negligent in this matter, this should be totally ignored.

I have mentioned all these details for the only purpose that some ignorant opponent who is not aware of the aims of the practices of our saintly elders find fault with the practices and procedures of the later veterans (RA) nor speak ill of them. It is also the purpose that a beginner on the path of Deen, devoid of sufficient knowledge of the issue may not misunderstand the point at issue and say : how is it possible

for devout men of penance, patience and devotion to take resort to the Quranic verses to save themselves from starvation? Such trend of thinking is based on ignorance, because it is proved by a Hadith that the objective of this practice is to attain the virtue of contentment and the ability to put in worship. It is not the greed, nor the satisfaction of sensual desires, nor a desire to get rid of the sufferings of the poverty-ridden and extremely strained life. If you follow this practice of resorting to the blessings of the Qur'anic verses and supplications, your heart will become relieved of the burden of starvation and of the worries of acquiring the necessaries of every day life. This has proved true by actual practice and experience.

THE SECOND QADIH - PRIDE

(This Is The Puffing Up Of The Self With Pride)

It is necessary to refrain form this vice for two reasons

The sin of "Pride" stands in the way of Allah's sympathy and assistance. A proud man is not enabled to do good deeds. In such a situation he is exposed to the danger of ruin and total loss. That is why the Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said that the following three vices are conclusive to ruin and damage :

1. Miserliness : It ruins the unfortunate person who becomes addicted to this.

2. Hankering after the satisfaction of sensual desires.

3. This vice is so heinous that it totally destroys virtuous and righteous deeds.

Hazrat Eesa (AS) once said to his disciples : The wind of Pride has extinguished many lamps (of virtue) and crippled

many devout and abstimious men. It deprives men of the virtue to his objective, that is worship and service of Allah, so that the servant of Allah is not able to earn any good. If he ever earns any good the sin of pride ruins it and he is left deprived of the reward of that good. It is therefore, necessary to refrain from this sin of Pride.

THE REALITY OF PRIDE, THE INJUNCTIONS AND ITS EFFECT.

The reality of pride is that the proud man begins to regard his good deeds as very splendid and virtuous. Our Ulama are of the opinion that the proud man attributes the grandeur and value of his good deeds to some man, his own self or something other than Exalted Allah. The Ulama say that sometimes Pride takes the form of a triangle. Sometimes the proud fellow attributes his good deeds to these three aspects mentioned above sometimes he attributes them only to two or only one of them.

The opposite word for pride (عجب) is منت (favour) which implies that a man should bear in mind the favours and bounties of Allah, He should think that, if he has done any good deed, it was with the help of Allah only and it is He only Who has increased the value of his deeds. To think of this favour of Allah is an obligatory duty when an urge of pride is felt in the heart. At other time it is only our optional duty.

How does the sin of pride affect good deeds? The Ulama have said that these deeds are multiplied on account of pride, unless the doer repents for the sin before his death. This is the opinion of a Karamiyah scholar, Muhammad Sabir. In his opinion حبط اعمال (failure of deeds) means that the deeds go waste and nothing is left in them for reward and appreciation. Other Ulama of the Ummah think that the good deeds done become only unfit for increase in their reward and that is all.

In this matter another question may arise? How can an A'rif and godly man forget that these deeds are done only by the help and mercy of Exalted Allah Who alone has the power to grant, by His mercy, increase in their value and reward? It must be remembered here that a very fine point is involved in this issue and it is that there are three types of men :

1. Those who always remain drowned in Pride. They are the Mu'tazilites and Qadri-ites who do not acknowledge Allah's favour and mercy in their deeds, nor Allah's special assistance and sympathy. This is due to the doubts and suspicions by which they remain surrounded.

2. Those who remain steadfast and firm in resolution. In no circumstances they take resort to pride. This is because they enjoy a special gift from Exalted Allah of assistance and insight.

3. Those who believe in a mixed attitude in this matter. They are the people of the Ahl-e-Sunnah. They remember the favours of Allah when they rise from the slumber of negligence, but remain in pride when they are drowned in negligence and oblivion. All this is due to temporary negligence, lack of effort and absence of far-sightedness in them.

What will be the fate of the deeds of the Qadri-ites and of the Mutazilites? The Ulama differ in their opinions on this question. According to some their deeds go waste on account of wrong belief. Some other Ulama maintain that the deeds of no groups go waste on account of their terse and vague beliefs, unless a specific shade of pride is found in every deed, just as it is not necessary that every deed of the Ahl-e-Sunnah should be free from Pride unless they take care to remember Allah's favour and assistance as a matter of regularity.

QAWADIH (DESTRUCTIVE FACTORS) OTHER THAN PRIDE AND OSTENTATION.

There are factors other than Pride and ostentation that ruin deeds. I have described only these two factors, Pride and Ostentation because they are more effective in ruining man's deeds. Some scholars say that it is necessary for a man to refrain from ten factors in protecting his deeds.

These are

(1) ریاء کاری (ostentation and show)

(2) Hypocrisy.

(3) Adulteration in intention.

(4) Expression of obligation on doing good to someone.

(5) Causing distress to anyone.

(6) Giving way to a feeling of regret .

(7) Pride.

(8) Regret and remorse.

(9) Laziness and lethargy.

(10) Fear of blame from the public.

My Shaikh (RA) has then mentioned the harms which each of these vices cause to man's deeds. He has also mentioned their opposites. The opposite of each is mentioned below serially :

(1) Sincerity in the desire for rewards and return.

(2) Sincerity in deeds.

(3) Purity in intention.

(4) Entrusting deeds to Exalted Allah.

(5) To protect one's deeds.

(6) To maintain the self steadfast on deeds.

(7) To remember and mention Allah.

(8) To value good deeds.

(9) To value and respect divine help.

(10) To fear Exalted Allah in every matter.

It should also be borne in mind that good deeds are ruined on account of hypocrisy and are rejected because of ostentation. The vices of laying obligation (منت) and causing distress to the people nullify charity (صدقه) without delay. However, according to some Ulama only the increase in reward is lost. All the Ulama are agreed that "regret" ruins all deeds. Pride destroys increase in rewards. Remorse, fear of blame and laziness and lethargy reduce the value and dignity of deeds.

I say that the acceptance or rejection of a deed depends on the realization of its value or on the underrating of its value. حبط اعمال (failures of deeds) means that the total benefit of the deed or the increase in that benefit goes to waste (sometime the benefit of a deed is increased manifold). ثواب (reward) is the recompense and return for a deed which accrues to the doer according to his circumstances and the situation.

Increase in reward means that the reward fixed for a deed is multiplied many times, e.g. 3 times, ten times, hundred times and so on so forth. As for increase in the value and grace of good deeds, it depends on different conditions and circumstances, e.g., nice dealings with nice people, but nice dealing with parents carry more reward. To behave nicely with a Prophet (AS) carries even greater reward than the reward for nice dealings with parents. Sometime the deeds increase in value but their reward is not multiplied. This is the gist of the entire discussion which I have furnished here.

SECTION 1

It is necessary for you to cross over this risky valley of Pride and ostentation with great care and caution. The valley is fraught with many dangers and fatal hazards. The traveller on the path of Deen has crossed over all the previous dangerous valleys, endured troubles and hardships in this path and then has attained the most precious treasure of worship. The greatest danger for the robber of this treasure lies in the valley of Pride and Ostentation, because this is full of dens of thieves and robbers. This contains many calamities, dangers and apprehensions which can destroy the worship of a worshipper. I am, therefore mentioning here some rules and principles which shall, God willing, be sufficient for safety and protection from this disease.

REMEDY FOR THE CURE OF OSTENTATION

It has four principles.

PRINCIPLE 1

The injunctions contained in the Holy Qur'an should be studied and obeyed. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

اَللّٰهُ الَّذِيْ خَلَقَ سَبْعَ سَمٰوٰتٍ وَّمِنَ الْاَرْضِ مِثْلَهُنَّ يَتَنَزَّلُ الْاَمْرُ بَيْنَهُنَّ لِتَعْلَمُوْا اَنَّ اللّٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ وَّاَنَّ اللّٰهَ قَدْ اَحَاطَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عِلْمًا. (سورة الطلاق:١٢)

It is Allah Who has created the seven heavens, and of the earth the like thereof. The commandment comes down among them slowly, that you may know that Allah is Able to do all things, and that Allah surrounds all things in knowledge. (65 : 12)

In other words, Exalted Allah wants that by reflecting upon His wonderful creation man may feel convinced of His Ability and All-Embracing knowledge. On the other hand you offer a few Rakats of prayer, that too full of defects and weaknesses and are not satisfied that it is enough that Allah observes your prayer and may be appreciating it. Instead of thinking Allah for this, you desire that men may become aware of your worship and praise you for this. This is neither loyalty nor wisdom. You are ignorant and foolish that you are thinking in this way.

PRINCIPLE 2

There is a man who has a precious gem which he can sell for thousands of Dinars, yet he sells it only for a few Dirhams. What a tremendous loss this man suffers? The people shall regard this man as a great fool and stupid fellow. In the same way a man may receive unlimited praise and appreciation from the people, but this is not even worth a penny against the reward and return from Allah and His appreciation of the deed. More than this, the entire Universe with all its riches an valuables can have no value and worth before the treasures and riches that are with Allah. It is therefore, a matter of great loss to purchase such worthless things with the inestimable blessings of Allah. If despite all

this, you wish to acquire the gains and resources of this filthy world, it is necessary to keep in view and work for, the benefits of the Hereafter. The benefits of the world will also accrue to you automatically. It is however, much better that one should be desirous only of Allah's pleasure, because on His pleasure depend the benefits of both the worlds which will accrue to you automatically. This is what this verse of the Holy Qur'an means :

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيْدُ ثَـوابَ الدُّنْيَا فَعِنْدَ ا للهِ ثَوَابُ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةِ (سـورة النساء : ١٣٤)

Whoso desires the reward of the world, (should know that) with Allah is the reward of the world and of the Hereafter (both) (4 : 134)

The Holy Prophet has said in a Hadith

ان ا لله ليعطى الدنيا بعمل الآخرة ولا يعطى الآخرة بعمل الدنيا

Exalted Allah grants the benefits of the world for the work of the Hereafter, but He does not grant the benefits of the Hereafter for the work of the world.

So, if you make your intention pure and your purpose well defined and clear for the benefits of the Hereafter, you will attain the benefits of the world as well as of the Hereafter. On the other hand, if you desire only the benefits of the world, then benefits of the Hereafter will slip away from your hands at once and it is just possible that you may not get the benefits of the world according to your desires and plan. Even if you get them, they may not remain with you and thus you may lose the world as well as the Hereafter :

خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ ذٰلِكَ هُوَ الْخُسْرَانُ الْمُبِيْنُ .

(He lost the world as well as the Hereafter and that is an evident loss.)

PRINCIPLE 3

You should not work for a being who becomes offended and displeased with you if he knows that you are working for him and began to look down upon you for that reason. A wise man can, therefore, never work for a being who, instead of appreciating the work, becomes angry with the doer and curses him.

You should make it a point to work for, and seek the pleasure of, Him Who bestows on you honour and His bounties, forgives your sins, pleases you and makes you independent of the entire world. Those who are wise should try to grasp this point.

PRINCIPLE 4

There is a man who knows a secret practice whereby he can attain the nearness to and pleasures of, great kings, yet he is busy with attracting the attention and pleasure of a mean and despised person. Such a man shall be regarded as a fool and devoid of all sense and wisdom. What will be the condition of that man on account of the displeasure of the King and when that mean person will also become displeased with this foolish man? This is exactly the state of those who are addicted to the vice of ostentation (ریاء). Why should they try to please an ordinary group of men when they possess the capacity and virtue of pleasing Almighty Allah, the king of both the worlds? If you at all think it foolishly that it is necessary to attain the pleasure of the people also, you should at least keep your intention pure and sincere for Exalted Allah. This is because the hearts of all the creation are in His hands. He can turn their hearts towards you and make them sympathetic with you. Thus, you shall attain all the blessings

which you could not attain by your own efforts. On the other hand if you do not follow this course but by your deeds to please the people instead of Allah, He will turn the hearts of the people away from you and make them disgusted and displeased with you. So, by following this foolish course, you shall earn the displeasure of Allah as well as of the people. This is a matter of great misfortune and loss خَسِرَ الدُّنْيَا وَالْآخِرَةَ.

It is related from Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) that there was a man who declared on oath that he would worship in such a way as would make him famous among the general public as a worshipper. To implement this decision he was the first to enter the mosque and the last to come out of it. He was always seen in prayers. He used to fast continuously for days and was seen sitting in assemblies of Zikr (rehearsals) and religious meetings. He passed seven months in this way. Despite all this when the people saw him passing by, they all said : May Allah do with this ostentatious persons this and that (i.e. they cursed him). Then it came to the man's mind that he wasted all that time in worship which was intended only for show. He then resolved that from that time onwards he would do all his worship and devotion only for the sake of Allah. When he thus changed his course of thought, action and intention the people prayed in his favour and appreciated his worship for his sincerity and genuineness. After saying thus Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) recited this verse of the Holy Qur'an:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمَانُ وُدًّا (سورة مريم : ٩٦).

Surely, those who believe and do good deeds, Merciful (Allah) shall appoint for them love. (19 : 96)

Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) has said that Exalted Allah Himself loves such persons and makes them beloved of the people also.

So far I have mentioned a remedy for the cure of رياء (ostentation). Next I am going to prescribe a remedy for the cure of Pride

REMEDY FOR THE CURE OF PRIDE

PRINCIPLE 1

Only that deed of a man is valuable and worthy when it finds acceptance with Exalted Allah. Otherwise it is totally worthless. A labourer works hard day and night only for two Dirhams similarly a gatekeeper remains wakeful for the whole night for a few coins. The work done by these workers is of little value. As against this, if you devote one day for the pleasure of Allah by fasting for Allah how much will the reward of that fasting be in the sight of Allah? It occurs in the Holy Qur'an :

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُونَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (سورة الزمر : ١٠)

Surely, the steadfast will be paid their wages without count. (39 : 10)

There is a Divine Hadith in which Exalted Allah has said:

اعددت لعبادی الصائمین مالا عینٌ رأت ولا أذنٌ سمعت ولا خطر على قلبِ بشر.

I have prepared for my fasting servants such Paradise as no eye has seen, nor an ear has heard nor has its idea occurred to the heart of any human being.

Just see ! This is the wage for fasting only one day. By devoting one day to some other work you would earn only a few Dirhams. In the same way what is your wage for keeping awake only one night in worshipping Allah? The Holy Qur'an Days :

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (سورة السجدة : ١٧)

No souls know what is kept hidden for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do. (32:17)

These are those very deeds that hardly could be valued at a few Dirhams but their value is multiplied manifold when they are done for seeking the pleasure of Allah. Think of the reward that Allah appoints only for offering two Rak'ats of prayer or even of the reward from Allah for the moment spent in only once the sacred Kalimah لااله الا الله Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

وَمَنْ عَمِلَ صَالِحًا مِّن ذَكَرٍ أَوْ أُنثَىٰ وَهُوَ مُؤْمِنٌ فَأُولَٰئِكَ يَدْخُلُونَ الْجَنَّةَ يُرْزَقُونَ فِيهَا بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (سورة المؤمن: ٤٠)

Whoso does right, whether male or female, and he/she is a believer such will enter the gardens (Paradise), where they will be provided with sustenance without count. (40:40)

The work you do in one hour or in a moment has no value in the eyes of the world. You are only wasting these precious moments in useless pursuits. However, this one moment of yours became precious because Exalted Allah appreciated and approved your deed of this one moment. It is, therefore, necessary for sensible and wi persons to admit and

realize that their deed was worthless but Exalted Allah, by His mercy, raised its value manifold and increased its reward accordingly. You should take care, lest your deed should become unworthy of Allah's acceptance and lose its value altogether. This may be illustrated by an example. A bunch of grapes or a bouquet of flowers has a low price in the market, but if it is presented as a gift to a generous King and he accepts it , then he will reward for this cheap gift thousands of Dinars. Thus the bouquet which a moment ago was only worth one Dirham has now become worthy of one thousand Dinars. On the other hand, if the King does not accept the bouquet and rejects it, then its value remains the same one Dirham. Exactly like this is the example of your deeds. Be watchful to understand this point and remember Allah's bounties and save your deeds from becoming valueless in the sight of Allah.

PRINCIPLE 2

You may be aware that when a King engages a servant and fixes his salary, the salary as well as the additional benefits like food, clothes are very scanty in return for which he takes from the servant different kinds of services. Notwithstanding this menial worth and low remuneration, the servant spends all his energies in giving the best service to the King in spite of suffering hardships in his service. When the King is riding he runs before the royal horse; at times he stands ground at the gate throughout the night. Sometime he sacrifices his life for the King when there is a man and enemy attack. The servant does all this disgraceful work and risks his life for the sake of a meagre return, Even that meagre return comes from Allah and then King is only an outer intermediary in the matter. Your Allah is so Powerful and Resourceful that He created you from nonentity, brought you up so nicely and bestowed upon you so many external and internal bounties that you cannot even think of their extent and volume. Exalted Allah has himself said :

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوْا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ لَا تُحْصُوْهَا. (سورة ابراهيم: ٣٤)

And if you count the bounty of Allah you cannot reckon it. (14 : 34).

You offer two Rak'ats of prayer which is full of defects and faults, yet Exalted Allah Promises to grant you, by His mercy, many rewards along with salvation in the Hereafter and you begin to feel proud on this prayer. It should be noted that it is not the way of wise man to take pride on such deeds as are in reality worthless, but become valuable only by Allah's mercy.

PRINCIPLE 3

Try to imagine as King with these prerogatives : All the Ministries and courtiers remain standing to serve him; great generals and governors wait on this King ready to obey his commands; the wise men and the scholars of the time praise him and run right and left in his service. Now the great King gives audience to an ordinary shopkeeper or a farmer and makes him stand along with the high - ranking statesmen commanders and governers of his kingdom, allots him prominent position in his court appreciates and approves his humble services. On seeing this strange behaviour of the King all will say that the King is very kind to this undeserving and worthless man. As a result of his undeserved acceptance and elevation in the King's court, if this man becomes proud and he places on the King his own obligation, all will consider this man to have gone mad and off his senses. After having taken this example, you should now, consider that our King is the Unquestionable Lord, Allah, such that whatever there is in the seven heavens an the earth and in between them sing His praise. The Holy Qur'an says :

وَإِنْ مِّنْ شَيْءٍ إِلَّا يُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِهٖ . (سورة بنى اسرائيل : ٤٤)

And there is not, a thing but sins His praise. (17 : 44)

He is such a Sublime Emperor that all the creation of the earth and the heavens remain prostrate before him voluntarily or unvoluntarily. All the Angels high and low including Hazrat Jibrael (AS), the trustworthy, Hazrat Mikael (AS), Hazrat Israfeel (AS) Hazrat Izrael, the Angels bearing the High Throne (عرش) and countless other Angels, whose number is known only to Allah, stand in His service all the time. In the same way highly honourable Prophets and Messengers of Allah like Hazrat Adam (AS), Hazrat Moosa (Moses), Hazrat Eesaa (AS) (Jesus Christ) and the last of the Prophets Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH) and so many other Prophets (AS) known to Allah. - they are all in Allah's service. There are likewise countless righteous and pious men friends of Allah, erudite Ulama, Imams, Sufis and saints with purified and pious minds and thoughts all are obedient servants of Exalted Allah.

As for these worldly Emperors Kings Rulers and dignitaries they are all most lovely slaves of Allah who prostrate themselves before Allah with humbleness and submissiveness and beg Allah to grant them their boons. They express their servitude slavery and humbleness in a most submissive way. They all show this humble slavery with a desire that the All-Merciful and Omnipotent Lord of all may cast a glance of mercy on them, grant their supplications and forgive their sins by virtue to His infinite mercy. What a mercy of Him that despite His greatness, glory and grandeur He has summoned you to His most elevated court. Again, this is despite the fact that if you seek an interview with the Magistrate or Mayor of your city your request shall be rejected. The King will not cast a glance on you, even if you bow down in prostration before him. But see how Almighty Allah has allowed you entry into His court and has accorded you

permission to worship him, rehearse his sacred names to have conversation with Him through His sacred Book, the Holy Qur'an. He has made promises to bestow upon you generous rewards and recompenses for your worthless and defective worship and devotion. Even now if you feel proud of your two Rak'ats of prayer and regard them of worth and value forgetting the generous favours and bounties of Allah you will be considered to be very ignorant, ungrateful, and foolish.

We, therefore seek refuge with Exalted Allah from the treacheries and seductions of this self; we entreat Him and place our trust in Him all sincerity.

I want to make you understand their point in another way. A King orders his visitors to visit him with some gift. In compliance with this command the dignitaries and rich men of the city take with them for the King very valuable gifts of gold ornaments, precious gems and costly costumes, etc. A poor man presents to the king an ordinary bunch of grapes or a kilo of cheap vegetables. All these precious gifts are presented to the King along with the cheap and lowly gift of the poor man. It so happens that the King accepts the poor man's gift and in acknowledgment of his poor gift he bestows on the man costly gems and robes of honour. On the receipt of this honour, if the poor man becomes proud, forgets the King's favour to him and behaves with arrogance he will be regarded as a fool, an ungrateful fellow one devoid of sense and civility. He will also be dubbed as an ignorant and stupid fellow. Only the most unfortunate and wretched idiot unable to distinguish between good and bad having a dead heart can behave in this way.

We pray to Glorious Allah to protect us from such idiocy and help us in all our affairs.

SECTION 2

In the end I say that this is a very arduous valley to cross-the valley of Pride and ostentation. While crossing it awake from the slumber of negligence to save yourself from irreparable loss. This valley is the gist of all the valleys discussed earlier. You will be benefited, if you cross it, safe and sound. In case of failure all your labour and exertions will go wasted. Your hopes will be frustrated and life will be ruined for nothing. In this valley three factors join together - (i) very hard work, (ii) great loss in the case of failures and (iii) it is fraught with risks.

HARD WORK

The passage of Pride and Ostentation through deeds and worship is very narrow and it is hidden. Only that man can discern it who is very keen-sighted, well educated and who possesses spiritual insight. The ignorant, the oblivious and the easy going in the matter of Deen can have no idea of the labour involved in this field.

A learned man of Nishawer once related to me the story of Hazrat 'Ata Aslami (RA) that once he prepared a very nice garment, decorated it to the best of his ability and made it very attractive and beautiful. He offered the garment for sale to a merchant in the market. The merchant offered a very low price for it and pointed out many defects in it. Hazrat Ata Aslami (RA) began to weep bitterly at the fate of his garment. Seeing this the merchant felt ashamed at his behaviour and agreed to purchase the garment at a higher price. Hazrat Aslami (RA) informed the merchant that he was weeping for something else. He told the merchant that he worked very hard in making the garment free from defect and valuable, but when he showed the garment to an expert he discovered so many defects in it of which the maker of the garment was unaware.

The Shaikh (RA) told the merchant that he was weeping for his ignorance of the defects in the garment.

Now consider a bit in the light of this story how defective, worthless and valueless our deeds will be when they are placed before the Lord of the worlds, although in our own eyes they look attractive and acceptable !

A righteous man has related that one day, sitting on the first floor of his home situated on the road-side, he was reciting Surah 20-Taa-Haa. When he had finished the recitation a spell of slumber came over him. In this condition he saw that a person came down from the heaven. He had a piece of paper in his hand which he opened before the Shaikh (RA). The Shaikh (RA) saw that ten good deeds were written under each word of the Surah, but the space under one word was left blank. The Shaikh (RA) protested to the celestial man against that omission because he had recited that word also. The man from the sky told the Shaikh (RA) that the ten good deeds under that letter had been ordered to be wiped off because when the Shaikh was reciting the word he raised his voice, because at that very moment a man was passing under the floor of the house. The reward for that one word of the verse was therefore, wiped off.

A Stupendous Loss

The other most harmful vice is that of Pride. In fact ostentation and pride contain in them great calamities. Sometimes a moment's ostentation and Pride nullify seventy years of worship and devotion.

It is related that once a man invited Hazrat Sufyan Sauri and his disciples to a feast. When the guests arrived at his house to partake of the feast the host ordered someone saying : Bring that tray which I had bought at my first Hajj and

also bring that tray which I had brought at my second Hajj. Looking at the man, Hazrat Sufyan (RA) said that the poor fellow ruined the rewards of both his Hajj pilgrimages by uttering only one sentence.

Another point to note in this matter it is that a small measure of pure worship free from all traces of ostentation an pride carries more value in the sight of Allah than a large measure of worship tainted with ostentation and pride. Hazrat Ali (RAA) is reported to have said:

> No deed which has found acceptance (with Allah) can be regarded as ordinary and scanty and in fact how can an accepted deed be scanty!

Someone asked Hazrat Ibrahim Nakh'i (RA) to tell the reward of certain deeds. The Shaikh replied that there is no end and limit of the reward for a deed which has found acceptance with Allah.

Hazrat Wuhab bin Munabbih (RA) has said that there was a man in the past communities who worshipped for Exalted Allah for seventy years, observed fast continuously for one week (without eating anything during this period). In the meantime he prayed to Allah for something, but his prayer was not granted. On this failure he addressed his self thus : This is due to the curse of your actions. If there had been any virtue in you, your prayer would have been granted. At that time an Angel from Exalted Allah called on him and said to him : O son of Adam ! Your entire worship of seventy years has gone waste. Your prayer has, however been granted only on acount of this one moment in which you humiliated and disgraced your self.

Now consider coolly, how the labour and exertions put in by a man for seventy years in worshipping Allah went waste but only a moment's reflection in sincerity surpassed in virtue seventy years of devotion. Is it not a tremendous loss? It is a great loss, indeed. Today you have at your disposal those precious moments which you waste for nothing. It is imperative to protect from loss a virtue which is so beneficial and valuable. That is why the glances of men of piety and righteousness fall on such fine and secret points. They work hard to catch and turn to good account such secret recesses of wisdom. First they labour to find out these points of wisdom and after having found them they labour to implement them or to refrain from them, as the case may be. They are not gratified by their open actions and efforts, because they are convinced that it is the sincerity of the deeds and not their number that counts. That is why, a small gem is far precious as compared with the value of a heap of cowries. (an article of insignificant value)

As for those who are ignorant of these secrets and these fine points and whose sights fail to discern that reality, they let the diseases of their hearts remain untreated and uncured. Such unfortunate persons are lousy and only multiplying the number of their prayer and fasts and in reducing their food and drink. They feel pleased with the number and volume of their acts of worship and remain ignorant of the real spirit of worship. What is the use of a walnut fruit which has no kernel inside it? Similarly what is the use of beautifying and decorating a building which is not strong in its structure and foundation? Such fine points and secrets are understood and grasped by only those who possess spiritual knowledge and inspiration.

و ا لله ولى الهداية والتوفيق

THE THIRD FACTOR

EXCESSIVE RISKS

There are many reasons for it

Allah Almighty is such a Dignified and Glorious Emperor that His greatness and sublimity are limitless and unfathomable. Similarly He has granted you so many peerless blessings which none can count or estimate. As for you, you are full of faults and defects. It is a matter of great fear and anxiety, if you commit any sin, because the self readily and quickly becomes inclined to sins. It is, therefore, binding on you to force unruly and filthy self to do such pious and pure deeds as a are worthy of, and fit for, the grandeur and glory of the Divine Court and may be acceptable to Exalted Allah. If you fail to do so, then you indeed are exposed to grievous loss. In such an adverse state of affairs it is not unlikely that calamities and difficulties may befall you which you may not be able to endure. You are indeed surrounded by terrible difficulties and you are under the strain of a great responsibility.

First of all turn your eyes towards the Glory and grandeur of Exalted and Dignified Emperor that is Allah the One. All the angels are standing arrayed night and day in His service. Some are in the state of Qiyam (standing in prayer) ever since they were created; some are in knelling, some in prostration. Some are busy with Tasbeeh (Rehearsal); some are reciting the Kalimah لا الـه الا الله and glorifying Allah. They are all busy with their assigned duties. They will remain in this state of devotion till the time the Trumpet is blown. Despite all this worship and devotion the endless call is :

سُبحٰنك ما عَبدناكَ حقّ عِبادتك

(Glory to You, we did not worship you as you deserve to be worshipped)

And also note what the leader and master of the Prophets, Muhammad (PBUH) has said, about Exalted Allah? He (PBUH) has said :

لا أُحصى ثناءً عليك أَنْت كما اثينت علىٰ نفسك

(I cannot count and comprehend, your praise as you have praised yourself).

See these are the words of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) about doing full justice to the praise of Allah. What then about worshipping Him as he should be worshipped? Also note carefully that it is the Holy Prophet (PBUH) who has said that none can enter Paradise by virtue of his deeds. Someone asked: O Prophet of Allah! Not even you? He (PBUH) replied: Yes not even myself, unless Allah's mercy overtakes me.

Also think of the countless bounties of Exalted Allah. Allah has said

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوْا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ لَا تُحْصُوْهَا . (سورة ابراهيم : ٣٤)

And if you count the bounty of Allah, you cannot count it. (14 : 34)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith :

(On the day of Judgement) the people will be raised up with three Registers (of deeds)	يُحشر الناس على ثلاثة د وا وين
The Register of good deeds and the Register of sins and vices.	ديوانُ الحسنات و ديوان السّيئات

The Register of bounties : Then the good deeds will be matched with the bounties.	وديوان النعم : فتقابل الحسنات بالنعم
Against one good deed will be placed one bounty until the good deeds will be covered by the bounties.	فلا يؤت بحسنة إلا اتى بنعمة حتى تغمر الحسنات النعم
Only the vices and the sins will remain.	وتبقى السيّئات والذّنوب
Then the will of Exalted Allah will have its option.	فللّه تعالى فيها المشية

Thirdly, it is also necessary to know the vices and the diseases of the self which I have already discussed earlier.

Fourthly, it should also be considered that a man takes pains in putting in worship and devotion for seventy years and despite that he remains in dark about the vices and faults of his self and, as such, it is possible that this prolonged devotion of his may not be accepted. It is also likely that his many years' prolonged worship may - God forbid - be spoiled by a moment's misconduct and wrong thinking.

A man may be busy with worshipping Exalted Allah outwardly without any inward concentration, and his heart is entangled with the thoughts of the world and its people and his worship is for mere show and ostentation. If Exalted Allah turns to this man in this condition he will be exposed to the severest curse and condemnation. May Allah save us all from this calamity!

It is related that someone saw Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) in a dream after his death and inquired about his

condition. Hazrat Hasan Basri (RA) said : When Exalted Allah summoned me before Him He said to me : O Hasan, do you remember that you were once praying in a mosque. When the people turned their attention to you, you began to make your prayer still better. If the beginning of your prayer had not been pure and sincere, I would have turned you out and severed all connections with you.

In short, this is a very delicate, and difficult issue. The people of spiritual insight began to feel afraid of their selves. Some of them became so cautious that they totally ignored those deeds of theirs which became known to the people. Hazrat Rabi'ah Basriyah (RA) has said that she did not acknowledge as her own any of her deeds which became known to the people. Some righteous saints have remarked : Conceal your good deeds as you conceal your faults and sins. If you want to do anything, then conceal your good deeds from the people.

Some asked Hazrat Rabiy'ah Basriyah : which of your deeds do you consider more hopeful and profitable? She replied that she had no hope from her major deeds.

It is related that once Mohammad bin Wasi' (RA) and Malik bin Dinar (RA) sat together talking to each other. Malik bin Dinar (RA) said : Either I shall have Allah's worship or Hell. (i.e., it is all right if I worship Allah or else Hell shall be my fate.). Muhammad bin Wasi' (RA) said : Either there will be Allah's mercy or Hell. By saying this he meant that our worship has no value. A man will go to Paradise only by virtue of Allah's mercy. At this Malik bin Dinar (RA) said : I stand in need of a teacher like you.

It is related about Hazrat Bayazid Bustami (RA) that he said : I took great pains in worshipping Allah for thirty years. One day someone said to me: O Bayazid, Allah's store-

house is full worship. If you want to reach Allah, adopt humbleness, submissiveness and modesty.

My Ustaz Hazrat Abul Hasan (RA) reported his Ustaz to have said : I know that whatever worship I put in, remains rejected by Allah. On being asked how he knew that, the Ustaz replied, saying : There are certain conditions for the acceptance of a deed and I do not fulfil those conditions. I therefore, know that my worship is not accepted by Allah. The people asked him why then he worshipped Allah. He replied, saying: I worship Allah in the hope that perhaps He may some day reform me to rectify my deeds and my self may become used to doing good deeds and it may not be necessary for me to put the self on the path of righteousness afresh. Now see what was the condition of these saints and pious men. As for our selves, a poet has described them as :

فاطلب لنفسك صحبة مع غيرهم وقع الا ياس وخابت الآمالُ
هيهات مدرك بالتوانى سادة كدوا النفوس وساعدا لا قبالُ

It seems quite appropriate at this place to quote a Hadith of the truthful Holy Prophet (PBUH) which I have quoted in other books also.

Hazrat Abdullah bin Mubarak (RA) has narrated from Hazrat Khalid bin Ma'dan (RA) that he requested Hazrat Mu'az bin Jabal (RAA) to narrate to him a Hadith which he had heard direct from the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and which he remembered and rehearsed daily on account of its difficulty and severity. Hazrat Mu'az (RAA) agreed to do so but he remained weeping for a long time. He (RAA) then said:

> How ardently do I long to meet the Holy Prophet (PBUH)!

Once I was with the Holy Prophet (PBUH). He was riding a camel and he (PBUH) took me up to sit behind him (PBUH). When we moved on the Holy Prophet (PBUH) looked up to the heaven and said : All praise is for Allah Who commands His creatures as He thinks fit. Then turning to me he (PBUH) said: I am telling you something. If you remember this it will benefit you, but if you forget it then you will have no argument before Exalted Allah.

Mu'az ! Before creating the heavens Exalted Allah created seven angels, one for every heaven and appointed one angel as a guard at each gate of the heavens according to the dimensions of the gate. When the two angels (کراماً کاتبین) rise up with the deeds of the servants there is light in them like the light of the sun. When they arrive at the first heaven, the angel standing guard there asks Kiraman Katibeen to thrust the deed at the face of the servant. The angel says : I am the angel of "Backbiting". My Lord, Allah, has commanded me that I should not allow the deed of a backbiter to go up.

The Kiraman Katibeen again rise up to the second heaven with some more deeds of the servant which shine like the sunshine. The angel stops them there and asks them to thrust the deed at the face of the servant, because his intention by this deed was to earn the worldly resources. My Allah has commanded me not to admit the deed of a man who worked for someone other than Allah. The angels then curse him till the evening.

Then the Angels rise up with other deeds of the servant like alms fasts and other good deeds which then consider to be very virtuous and valuable. But when they arrive at the third heaven the guarding Angel stops them and asks them to thrust the deeds at the face of the doer. He says that he is the Angel of Pride. He has commands from his Lord not to allow the deeds to go up, as the doer wanted through the deeds to display his superiority among the people.

The Kiraman Katibeen rise up with some more deeds of this servant which shine brightly like stars. These include nice deeds like prayer, Hajj, Tasbeeh (Rehearsal on beads), fasting etc. When they reach the fourth heaven the guard angel stops them and asks them to thrust the deeds at the doer's face. The angel tells them : I am the angel of pride and have commands from my Lord not to let the deeds go up higher as the doer adulterated his deeds with Pride.

Then the angels decorate like a bride his other righteous deeds which include Hajj Jihad etc. shining like the sun. They take them to the fifth heaven. The guard Angel stops them, saying : I am the Angel of jealousy. The doer remains jealous of those whom Allah has by his mercy, granted His bounties. The man is not pleased with Allah's generous grants. My Lord has commanded me not to let his deeds go up higher.

Then the Angels go up to the sixth heaven with his deeds like ablution, full purification, prayer, fasting, Hajj etc. The guard Angel posted there stops them, saying, I am the Angel of mercy. Thrust his deeds at his face, as he has never shown mercy to anyone. He was pleased to see others in trouble and misfortune. My lord has commanded me that I should not let his deeds rise up higher.

Thereafter, the Kiraman Katibeen rise up to the seventh heaven with some more deeds of this man including alms, prayer, fasting, Jihad Taqwa etc. These deeds give out loud sounds like thunder clamp and lightning. The angel on the seventh heaven says: I am the Angel of fame. This man had intended to earn fame through his deeds of moving in the company and assemblies of Ulama and men of position and dignity My Lord has commanded me not to let the deeds of this man go higher up.

Thus deed which has not been done purely for Exalted Allah is ostentation (رياء) and He does not accept such deeds. Then the Angels rise up with his good deeds like prayer, fasting, Zakat, Hajj, Umrah, amicable character, silence, Allah's remembrance etc. The Angels of the seventh heaven accompany them to see them off till they reach the Divine Court where all curtains are removed and they testify before Exalted Allah that the deeds of this servant are exclusively for Allah.

At this moment Exalted Allah shall say : your Angels look after the deeds of those servants

but I look after their heart. I know that by these deeds he did not intend to seek My pleasure, nor did he do them exclusively for My sake. I know what he really intended by his deeds. My curse be on him that he deceived you as will as the people. He could, however not deceive me because I know very well the innermost recesses of the hearts conceal. None can remain hidden from Me nor escape my grip, however, hard he may try to be away from me. I have full knowledge of what has happened in the past and what shall happen in the future. My knowledge encompasses all those who have passed away and those who are to come. I am fully aware of all the secrets with their full details. None can deceive Me by his deeds. My servant may deceive the ignorant but he cannot deceive Me, because I am the knower of the unseen. I, therefore, curse him. The seven Angels and the three thousand Angels all curse him. Then the inmates of the heavens say that on him be their curse and the curses of those who curse such deceiver.

After hearing all these details Hazrat Mu'az (RAA) burst into tears and said: O Messenger of Allah (PBUH) ! How to get rid of this calamity? The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said : O Mu'az, obey your Prophet (PBUH) with full faith and conviction. Hazrat Mu'az (RAA) said: you are a Messenger of Allah and I am Mu'az bin Jabal. How can I get salvation? The Prophet of Allah (PBUH) said : O Mu'az, if your deeds are not up to the Mark, protect your tongue from speaking ill of others and disgracing others, particularly your brethren

and the Huffaz (those who have committed the Holy Qur'an by Heart). Do not meddle with the affairs of your brethren and other persons. Let your own evil self refrain from dishonouring others. Do not praise your self by speaking ill of your Muslim brethren. Never think of establishing your superiority by degrading other. Do not take resort to ostentation to earn fame. Do not busy yourself with the affairs of the world so keenly as to be totally neglectful of the affairs of the Hereafter. If someone is sitting with you do not talk secretly to a third person. Do not express to others your superiority among the people lest your deeds should be ruined in the world and in the Hereafter. Refrain in your assemblies talking on topics of shamelessness and lewdness, lest people should avoid you on account of your misbehaviour. Do not injure with your tongue the honour of others lest the dogs of hell should tear you to pieces. Almighty Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

وَّالنّٰشِطٰتِ نَشْطًا (سورة النازعات : ٢)

And when they tear away the flesh from the bones.(79: 2)

I then said: O Messenger of Allah Who possesses, the ability to act upon all these injunctions? The Holy Prophet (PBUH) said: Action is easy for that servant for whom Exalted Allah provides ease. Dislike for others also that which you dislike for yourself. (Action in this way may bring you salvation)

Hazrat Khalid bin Ma'dan (RA) has said that Hazrat Mu'az (RAA) did not recite the Holy Qur'an as much as he recited this Hadith. He frequently talked about this Hadith in his assemblies.

The hearts shudder with fear and suffocation and the minds are disturbed by thinking of the warnings and great risks disclosed in this Hadith. It is therefore, necessary to seek Allah's protection and refuge and lay yourself at His gate, weeping and in all humbleness and submission all days and nights. You have no protection from this torment except Allah's mercy. You cannot cross over this sea of punishment without Allah's glance of compassion on you. It is necessary for you to rise from the slumber of negligence, to understand the aim of life and to launch a crusade against the self in this terrible valley, so that you may attain salvation in the Hereafter and may not go with those who are doomed to loss and ruin. Help will however, come only from Allah, as He Alone is the Most Merciful.

SECTION 3

In short you have now pondered over the matter thoroughly and discovered the value of Allah's worship, the helplessness and weakness of Allah's creatures. You took no notice of them and felt disgusted with their useless praise; nor did you prefer to worship these perishable materials of the world. You came to know the mean and perishable character of the world ; you did not long for these worldly resources in preference to Allah's worship. You felt in your heart that it is much better to praise and honour the Lord of the two worlds than to praise and honour this wretched and helpless creation. In fact, the people of the world do not recognize the value and worth of these deeds of virtue and piety nor can they realize the hardships of this path. That is why these worldly people sometimes bestow great respect an honour upon persons who

have no virtue in them, but in times of need and difficulties these so called men of piety turn their eyes from their supporters. In fact these empty-handed men have no power to help or harm anyone. All resources and power lie in the hand of Allah. So, O self, take heed and do not waste your worship and devotion for the sake of these deceitful persons. Allah Alone deserves praise. In Him lie all grandeur, sublimity and good. He is the treasure of salvation and forgiveness. So, do not lose His attention and favour. Is it better to attain eternal Paradise or the short lived small benefits and a little ease in income of this perishable world? You have now the golden opportunity to attain the endless and eternal blessings of the Hereafter through your worship. You should give up your meanness and cowardice, if any. See that the higher a pigeon flies in the sky, the more valuable it becomes. You should also employ all your capacities in the attainment of spiritual value and station. You should work exclusively for Allah Who has the power to do, whatever, He wills. So, do not waste for nothing the little worship which you are doing.

After reflecting well on these aspects you have seen the favours and great bounties of Allah. It is He Who bestowed upon you the strength to worship Him, removed the hurdles and obstacles in this path gave you peace and freedom for worship, helped you by making the path of worship and devotion easy for you. He praised you and granted you valuable reward and recompense in spite of His Glory and Grandeur, having no need of your worship, and having showered on you so may favours and bounties, even though you hardly deserved any of these. He favoured you with all these blessings out of His infinite mercy, otherwise what worth and value had your poor worship and deeds in His sight? It is now your duty to remember all these divine grants and gifts. Have an eye on His mercy and favour instead of on your own worthless worship and deeds for the acceptance of which you

should always pray to Allah and build your hopes on His mercy alone.

When Hazrat Ibrahim Khalilullah (AS) completed the construction of Allah's House (the Ka'bah) he prayed to Allah humbly and fervently to accept this service. The words of the Holy Qur'an are :

رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّا اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمِ ط (سورة البقره : ١٢٧)

Our Lord ! Accept from us (this duty) certainly, You and You alone are the Hearer, the Knower (2 : 127).

After this He said:

رَبَّنَا وَ تَقَبَّلْ دُعَآءِ (سورة ابراهيم : ٤٠)

And our Lord ! Accept the prayer. (14 : 40)

If Exalted Allah has, by His mercy accepted your worthless worship, it is a matter of great joy for you and it is a great favour of Him on you and a great good luck indeed. You may expect to receive even greater grants and bounties. In the same way if your deeds are not accepted, it will be a matter of great loss. So go on doing good deeds in the path of Allah to the best of your capacity. After having completed your worship, if you reflect in your heart on such lines and seek help from Allah, your heart shall become disgusted with the public as well as your own self. Giving up ostentation and pride, your heart shall remain concentrated on sincerity and goodness. You will be able to put in worship free from defects and faults. Your deeds, pure and free from any adulteration, will be accepted by Allah. I say that it is quite enough, if you put in such worship even once in life. Even little but pure and sincere worship carries more reward. The opportunity to offer

such worship comes rarely. This opportunity, however, arrives only with the mercy of Allah. Grasp these points well and act upon them with sincerity. If you do this you will find a place among the sincere servants of Exalted Allah. You will thus have crossed this dangerous valley, you will be saved from its calamities and will be granted its benefits.

و الله ولى التوفيق۔

Chapter Seven

THE VALLEY OF PRAISE AND GRATITUDE

May Exalted Allah help us to do good when you have crossed over all the difficult valleys and have, therefore, been able to put in worship free from all defects and faults, it has become bindings on you to render thanks to Exalted Allah. There are two reasons for this;

1. The Blessings Of Gratitude Is Everlasting.

Gratitude is a condition for the preservation of a blessing. So, in rendering thanks to Allah for a blessing there is a guarantee for the permanence of that blessing. If thanks are not rendered, the blessing may be taken away. Glorious Allah has said :

إِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتّٰى يُغَيِّرُوْا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ . (سورة الرعد : ١١)

Surely Allah does not change the condition of a community, until they change that which is in their hearts. (13 : 11)

He also said;

فَكَفَرَتْ بِاَنْعُمِ اللهِ فَاَذَاقَهَا اللهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوْعِ وَالْخَوْفِ بِمَا كَانُوْا يَصْنَعُوْنَ ط
(سورة النحل : ١١٢)

---- but it disbelieved in Allah's favours, so Allah made it taste the garb of hunger and fear, because of what they used to do. (16 : 112).

At another place Allah has said :

مَا يَفْعَلُ اللهُ بِعَذَابِكُمْ اِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ وَاٰمَنْتُمْ ط (سورة النساء : ١٤٧)

What has Allah to do with your punishment, if you are thankful (for His bounties) and believe (in Him) (4:147).

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith: The blessings perish just as a wild beast runs away. So arrest it with the chain of gratitude.

Gratitude leads to the increase of blessings because it is a necessary condition for blessings. Allah Almighty has said:

لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَاَزِيْدَنَّكُمْ (سورة ابراهيم : ٧)

If you give thanks, I will give you more. (14:7)

Allah further said :

وَالَّذِيْنَ اهْتَدَوْا زَادَهُمْ هُدًى وَّاٰتَاهُمْ تَقْوَاهُمْ. (سورة محمد:١٧)

As for those who take the right path, He adds to their guidance and increases them in their righteousness. (47 : 17)

And he said :

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا (سورة العنكبوت : ٦٩)

As for those who strive in us, We surely guide them to our path. (29 : 69)

It is a general rule that when a kind and appreciating master sees that his servant has discharged efficiently his duty he bestow on him more favours, but if he sees that the servant has not discharged his duties honestly then the master withholds from him even the regular wages.

You should know tht there are two types of blessings - (i) the blessings of the world and (ii) the blessings of Deen. The blessings of the world have been further divided into lucrative blessings and preventive blessings.

Lucrative blessings are these which are profitable for you and serve your needs and interests. They include the necessaries as well as the comforts and luxuries of life.

As regards preventive blessings, they are those whereby harmful things and diseases, etc. are removed from you. These include internal disorders like pains and diseases and external forces of harm, i.e., losses, opponents and enemies. These are blessings relating to the world.

As regards blessings relating to Deen, they are also of two types - (i) blessings of divine assistance, e.g., the blessing of Eeman (faith) and Islam and that of the right school of thought of the Ahl-e-Sunnah wal-Jama'at along with the blessings of worship and devotion.

(ii) the blessings of protection from disbelief, polytheism, and other wrong beliefs and acts of vices and sins.

None knows the full details of these blessings, except the knower of the unseen Who has granted by His mercy, all these blessings. Allah has said:

وَإِنْ تَعُدُّوا نِعْمَةَ اللهِ لَا تُحْصُوهَا . (سورة ابراهيم : ٣٤)

And if you count the bounty of Allah you can not reckon it. (14 : 34)

The excessive, inestimable increase in these favours and blessings depends on a man's action in praising Allah and rendering thanks to Him. It is imperative that the servants of Allah should adopt these virtues.

The Reality Of Gratitude And Praise, Their Meanings And Injunctions Thereon

The Ulama have mentioned some difference between Praise and gratitude. They have said that Praise includes actions like Tasbeeh (Rehearsals) and Tahleel (reciting لا اله الا الله). Praise is therefore, an external action. As regards gratitude, it is concerned with Tafweez (entrustment). As such it is an internal action.

The opposite of gratitude is ingratitude, i.e., abstaining from thanks giving. The opposite of praise is blaming and speaking ill of someone.

The third difference is that the word praise is in general and common use. The word gratitude is an uncommon term and is used only sparingly. Allah has said :

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ . (سورة سبا : ١٣)

Only a few of My servants are thankful. (34:13)

It is now clear from the foregoing exposition that each of the two words has a different meaning. You should know that the word praise is used to appreciate good deeds. My Shaikh (RA) also holds the same opinion.

As regards the meaning of شکر (gratitude) the Ulama differ in their opinions. Hazrat Ibn Abbas (RAA) has said that gratitude means to obey the creator of the Universe, Allah, internally as well as externally with all the limbs of the body.

Some of our Ulama subscribe to this meaning of gratitude. Some others maintain that to refrain from disobeying Allah externally as well as internally means gratitude. Another Alim has said that it is gratitude to prevent the self from disobedience and sins and to exercise constant control over it. The meaning is almost the same that one should refrain from internal as well external dis- obedience of Allah and should exercise control over the heart, the tongue and other limbs of the body in order ot stop them from committing disobedience.

These two opinions differ from each others that in the first opinion abstention from disobedience and sins mean gratitude. In the second opinion the exercise of control over the self has also been included in the meaning along with abstention from sin.

My Shaikh (RA) has said that the meaning of gratitude is that one should exalt and glorify Allah so much that one should become safe from being ungrateful and disloyal to Allah. This may be expressed more appropriately by saying that gratitude is the name of honouring and respecting one's Benefactor. According to this meaning it will be all right to use

the word شكر (gratitude) for the servant of Allah also. I have mentioned this point in detail in Ihya-e-Uloomiddin.

To sum up, rendering thanks to Allah means that the Benefactor should be glorified and honoured in such a way that there should be no feeling of ingratitude at all. This is possible only when the servant remembers the favours of the Benefactor and realizes that a grateful person has goodness in him on account of his gratitude and an ungrateful person has vices in him on account of his ingratitude.

I say that it is the least right of the Benefactor that after enjoying His blessings He should not be disobeyed. How despicable will that person be who disobeys the Benefactor after having received His blessings. Gratitude to this extent is an obligatory duty (فرض) that the thought of the blessings of Exalted Allah should stop the servant from disobeying Him. This is the real and genuine virtue of gratitude. In addition to this, it is also necessary to render thanks to the Benefactor to the extent of His favours. A question arises What is the place and occasion of gratitude?

The occasion of gratitude consists in the blessings of the world and of the Hereafter on which expression of gratitude is necessary equal to the value and worth of each blessing.

Is it also necessary to express gratitude on the distresses that befall a servant in respect of his own wealth and life and his household? The Ulama have expressed different opinions on this question.

Some have said that it is not necessary to render thanks on the arrival of troubles and difficulties, as thanks are due on blessings. Only patience and perseverance are essential on troubles and difficulties.

Some Ulama have said that no distress descends from Exalted Allah which does not conceal some good for the servant of Allah. It is, therefore necessary to render thanks on the good hidden in the distresses. These hidden blessings are those about which Hazrat Ibn Umar (RAA) has said :

> Whenever I suffered from some distress, I found four bounties therein from Exalted Allah, viz. (i) the distress did not affect my faith (ii) a distress greater than that did not fall on me. (iii) I did not fail to remain pleased with Allah's will and (iv) I hope to receive reward on that distress.

Another saint has said that it is another blessing that the distress is not permanent. It will come to an end sometime and that it has come from Allah and not from some alien source.

In the light of these details it is necessary that a servant should be grateful to Allah for the troubles and distresses that come down from Him, because these hardships and tortures are nothing as compared with the gains and rewards of the Hereafter concealed in them.

Try to understand this from an example. In order to cure you from a malady the physician prescribes for you a bitter medicine and inflicts on you cuts with a knife and this results in your cure. The operation of the physician is in reality a great blessing for you, even though apparently it is very tortuous and painful. This is exactly the example of the calamities of the world that descend from Allah.

Just consider how the Holy Prophet (PBUH) rendered thanks to Exalted Allah on arrival of distress and hardship. He (PBUH) has said :

الحمد لله على ما ساء وسرّ ـ

All praise is for Allah who displeases and pleases.

Allah Almighty has said :

فَعَسٰى اَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَّيَجْعَلَ اللهُ فِيْهِ خَيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ۔ (سورة النساء:١٩)

It may happen that you hate a thing wherein Allah has placed much good. (4 : 19)

What Allah has called in this verse "plentiful good" is beyond your imagination. Blessing here does not mean sensual desires and enjoyments. Blessing is the name of increase in status. If the status of a servant is increased by some distress and affliction, that is indeed a great blessing, although outwardly it seems to be a distress and a source of torture.

Who is superior, one who is patient or one who is grateful? Some Ulama say that the grateful person is superior. This opinion is supported by this verse of the Holy Qur'an :

وَقَلِيْلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِىَ الشَّكُوْرُ (سورة سبا : ١٣)

And (only) a few of My servants are thankful. (34 : 14)

In this verse Exalted Allah has included the grateful among His favourite servants. While mentioning Hazrat Nooh (AS) He has said :

اِنَّهٗ كَانَ عَبْدًا شَكُوْرًا (سورة بنى اسرائيل : ٣)

Certainly he was a grateful slave. (17 : 3)

About Ibrahim (AS) Allah has said :

شَاكِرًا لِّأَنْعُمِهِ . (سورة النحل : ١٢١)

(He was) thankful for His bounties. (16 : 121)

There is another point to note that thanks are rendered in response to bounties and comforts. A saint has said that he considers it much better to render thanks for a blessing than to resort to patience on a distress.

According to some Ulama one who observes patience is superior because he endures distress. Allah has said :

إِنَّا وَجَدْنَاهُ صَابِرًا نِّعْمَ الْعَبْدُ (سورة ص : ٤٤)

Certainly We found him steadfast How excellent a slave! (38 : 44)

Allah further said :

إِنَّمَا يُوَفَّى الصَّابِرُوْنَ أَجْرَهُمْ بِغَيْرِ حِسَابٍ (سورة الزمر : ١٠)

The steadfast will certainly paid their wages without count. (39 : 10)

وَ اللّٰهُ يُحِبُّ الصَّابِرِيْنَ (سورة آل عمران : ١٤٦)

And Allah loves the steadfast. (3 : 146)

I am of the opinion that a man who is thankful must also be steadfast and one who is steadfast must also be thankful. This is because a man who is thankful also suffers from hardships and distresses in the world, but he remains patient and does not display impatience. I have already given the meaning of gratitude which implies to honouring and respecting the Benefactor to such an extent that it becomes impossible to disobey Him. Impatience too is a form of disobedience. Similarly a man who is patient is not devoid of

blessings, because hardships and distresses too conceal in them blessings. Thus, when the patient servant takes to patience he also at the same time becomes thankful. He withholds himself from showing impatience in honour of Allah and this is the meaning of gratitude. In gratitude a person holds his Benefactor in such esteem and honour as prevents him from being ungrateful. When the grateful man refrains from ingratitude, he in fact takes to patience and urges his self to render thanks. Thus he is in fact a patient servant of Allah and one who holds Allah in great esteem and refrains from crying and moaning on facing difficulties and hardships. When he takes to patience, he in reality becomes grateful. To stop the self from ingratitude despite itself is a distress from which the grateful man renders thanks.

The ability to remain secure from sin and to take to the virtue of patience is a blessing for which the patient person renders thanks to Allah. Thus, none of the two is separate from the other.

The deep insight which induces a man to these two virtues (i.e., patience and gratitude) is one and the same. In the opinion of some Ulama it is the insight of ability. That is why I have said that the virtues of patience and gratitude (i.e., صبر و شکر) are in separably connected with each other and are not alien to each other, but are one and the same as already mentioned.

و ا لله ولى التوفيق و الهداية

SECTION 1

Now you will have to cross this valley (of praise and gratitude) with courage and effort, keeping in mind two points.

A blessing is granted always to that man who acknowledges its worth and it is the grateful servants of Allah who acknowledge and realize the worth and value of blessings. The proof of this lies in a verse of the Holy Qur'an in which Exalted Allah explains this point after mentioning the taunting remarks of the disbelievers.

أَهٰؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ بَيْنِنَا ۗ أَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشّٰكِرِيْنَ (سورة الانعام : ٥٣)

Are these they whom Allah favours among us?
Is not Allah best Aware of the thanks givers?
(6 : 53)

Those ignorant disbelievers had the notion that it is only the rich people who deserve blessings and that dignity, honour and status are granted only to those who hail from prominent families. The disbelievers, therefore, resented that the poor and the weak and the slaves should be favoured with greatest blessing (of faith). As reported in the Qur'an, they said by way of joke :

أَهٰؤُلَآءِ مَنَّ اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِمْ مِّنْ بَيْنِنَا

Are these they whom Allah favours among us?

In reply to this question of theirs Allah said:

أَلَيْسَ اللّٰهُ بِأَعْلَمَ بِالشّٰكِرِيْنَ

Is not Allah best Aware of the thanks givers?

Allah bestows His blessings upon those who value these blessings. These are they who turn with due attention to the blessings, accept and adopt them in preference to the entire world and endure the troubles which they have to face in acquiring these blessings. They always remain standing at the

door of the Grantor (Allah) of the blessings. Exalted Allah has ordained beforehand that it is the poor believers who will value Allah's blessings (of Eeman) and will render thanks to Allah for this. These poor believers are, therefore more deserving of this blessing than the disbelievers. Wealth, honour, fame, status and high family connections have nothing to do in this matter. They regard wealth, property and high family connections as the greatest blessing and are proud of it in total disregard of the right path of Deen and the knowledge of Deen. They do not accept, but look down upon the Deen (Faith) on which these poor and weak believers bestow their best attention and sacrifice their lives in its path. They do not mind any loss or anyone's enmity in their march along the path of this true Deen of Allah. It is these people who recognize the value and worth of this greatest blessing (Eeman), which has become firmly impressed on their hearts. It has become very easy for them to bear all sorts of losses for the sake of this Deen (Faith), for which they are prepared to undergo any trouble and hardship. It is no burden on them to spend even the entire tenure of life to be able to give thanks for the attainment of this blessing. It is these people who deserve this bounty and divine favour. That is why, this great blessing (Eeman) has been bestowed on them.

I say that Exalted Allah has assigned a particular blessing and branch of action to a particular section of this Ummah viz. He has assigned to some, knowledge and to some worship. It seems that these are the privileged groups who are most of all aware of the worth and value of their specific branch of Deen, try to acquire it and render thanks to Allah for this bounty. As regards the other ill fated group, Exalted Allah has deprived them of this blessing because of their indifference to, and disregard of, it. If these men of the streets and markets, had the right idea of the value of knowledge and worship, they would never turn to the markets, but they would engage themselves in learning and worship.

Just consider that when a Faqih or a Mufti (experts in religious matters) succeeds in solving some difficult religious problem, he goes beside himself with joy. He is so much absorbed in the branch of his specialized course of study and research that sometimes he remains occupied with the solution of a problem for ten or twenty years and when reaches the correct solution of the problem by the guidance of Exalted Allah, he considers this a great divine favour for him.

Contrary to this if an ordinary man of the street faces the same problem, he gets bored with it. If by chance he arrives at the correct solution of the problem, he attaches no importance to it.

Take the case of a God-fearing saint. In order to strengthen his relations with Allah strives very hard through Mujahidah and exertion. He stops his self from taking the path of satisfying his sexual desires, offers prayer with full concentration and due regard to the prescribed rules of praying. He prays to Allah with exemplary submission and tearful eyes with the hope that Allah may grant him even a single moment of true supplication and nearness to Him. If he succeeds in getting a single moment of this devotion even in a month, in one year or even once in his lifetime, he considers it a great blessing and a great favour of Allah to him. He renders sincere thanks to Allah for this favour and does not mind at all his deprivation of the temptations of the world and the hardships faced day and night for this purpose.

In contrast to him, there is another person who has no interest in turning to Allah. He is not prepared to give up even one meal, useless gossip a night's sleep for the sake of worship and devotion. He has no value nor regard in his heart for sincere worship and devotion. He indeed feels much pleased on getting some money and on eating his fill some delicious food and on falling into deep sleep. He considers these worldly

enjoyments to be valuable divine favours. How can such a man be compared to men of God like the saint described in the foregoing paragraph.

Just like this the Ruler of all ruler (Allah) has entrusted different duties to different groups of men and He alone knows the secret of this division of duties.

So far has been furnished an explanation of the verse.

You should reflect upon the points contained in this explanation and note that if you want to attain some virtue and goodness, none can prevent you from the attainment of that virtue, except your own self. It is necessary to value and honour the bounties of Allah because this helps in the preservation and enhancement of these bounties.

On the other hand if no value is attached to a bounty nor is it honoured and respected, it is snatched. It is, in fact, the ungrateful person who does not appreciate and value Allah's bounty. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an:

وَاتْلُ عَلَيْهِمْ نَبَأَ الَّذِىٓ اٰتَيْنٰهُ اٰيٰتِنَا فَانْسَلَخَ مِنْهَا فَاَتْبَعَهُ الشَّيْطٰنُ فَكَانَ مِنَ الْغٰوِيْنَ ○ لَوْ شِئْنَا لَرَفَعْنٰهُ بِهَا وَلٰكِنَّهٗٓ اَخْلَدَ اِلَى الْاَرْضِ وَاتَّبَعَ هَوٰهُ فَمَثَلُهٗ كَمَثَلِ الْكَلْبِ اِنْ تَحْمِلْ عَلَيْهِ يَلْهَثْ اَوْ تَتْرُكْهُ يَلْهَثْ .

(سورة الاعراف: ١٧٥-١٧٦)

Recite to them the tale of him to whom We gave Our revelations but he abandoned them, of Satan overtook him and he become of those who had gone astray. And had We willed, We would have raised him thereby but he clung to the earth and followed his own lust. Therefore, his likeness is as the likeness of a dog. If you load him he pants with his tongue drawn out

and if you leave him he pants with his tongue
drawn out. (7 : 175 - 176)

The intention of Exalted Allah by these verse is to declare that He bestowed on his servants very valuable blessings relating to Deen whereby they can attain with Allah high positions. But His servants did not value those blessings and became attracted by the mean and worthless resources of this wretched world, began to satisfy their lusts and did not realize that these resources of the world and its temptations have no value not even equal to the wing of a mosquito, in the sight of Allah. Depending on their poor wisdom they have become like that dog who has no capacity of distinguishing between what is high and what is low. Near a dog all honour and all dignity lie in a piece of bread and the discarded bones of the dining table. It is all the same to a dog whether you seat him on the royal throne or on the heap of filth and garbage. In his eyes all honour and dignity consist in the articles of food and drink.

In short, when this servant did not value Allah's blessings nor did he acknowledge the degree of the high status granted to him, the sharpness of his sight was taken away from him and he turned his attention to entities other than Allah and became absorbed in the cheap and worthless enjoyments and temptations of the world in total disregard of the precious blessings of Allah. Exalted Allah then summoned him to His court of justice issued against him the judgement of punishment and condemnation and snatched from him all His favours and bounties relating to Deen and also all honour and status. Thus, he became deprived of all the things which Allah had granted him by His mercy. He was turned out of Allah's presence like a hated dog and accursed Satan.

We seek refuge with Allah from His wrath and the painful torment. Allah is Most Merciful. Take an example to

understand this point. There is a king who bestows on his slave honour and status, the royal robe of dignity and makes him sit by his side, confers on him a status greater than that of his other servants and allows him full freedom to be in his presence. He builds for him at some other place a magnificent palace with a royal throne in it. Then he orders his slave girls and other attendants to stand before him, well decorated and attired, so that after relief from the king's service, he may live in his own palace like a master and a vicegerent. In spite of all this honour and status this very slave looks at some low placed menial servant of the king eating a piece of bread or a dog chewing a bone and becomes interested in the latter in total disregard of his master, the king; he begins to envy the menial servant or the dog for the piece of bread or the bone of the dog, forgetting his own honour and high status granted to him by the King. If the King sees him n this condition what opinion will he form about this foolish slave who did not do any justice to the generous royal grants? The king will take this servant to be very mean-minded, foolish and hopelessly ignorant. He will at once order him to be deprived of all the royal favours and honours and to be turned out of the royal court.

This is exactly the example of an Alim and devotee who becomes attracted by the charms of the world and begins to follow his lusts. Allah has raised him to honour by His verses and the sacred injunctions of the Sharee'ah but he does not value this honour and favour. Instead he desires such worldly objects as have no value at all in the sight of Allah. He accords preference to those worthless things over knowledge, worship, wisdom and information about the realities of divine rules and regulations of Deen. He also does not feel any interest in the bounties and favours which Exalted Allah has prepared for him in the Hereafter. How unfortunate and wretched this fellow will be ! He is indeed in a very bad situation.

Allah is Most Merciful. We pray to him to reform our conditions, by His infinite mercy.

SECTION 2

O servant of Allah ! It is binding upon you to value the worth and price of the bounties of Exalted Allah. When He teach you anything concerning Deen you should accept it with a good grace in preference to the greatest blessings of the world; as a rule, a man becomes interested in the worldly resources only when his interest in and love in Deen become dimmed in his eyes.

Allah has said to the Holy Prophet :

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَاكَ سَبْعًا مِّنَ الْمَثَانِيْ وَالْقُرْآنَ الْعَظِيْمِ . لَا تَمُدَّنَّ عَيْنَيْكَ إِلَىٰ مَا مَتَّعْنَا بِهِ أَزْوَاجًا مِّنْهُمْ ... (سورة الحجر : ٨٧-٨٨)

We have given you seven of the often repeated (verses) and the Great Qur'an. Do not strain your eyes towards that which we cause, some pairs of them to enjoy (15 : 87 - 88)

In other words, it is not lawful to look at the world with covetous eyes for one who has been favoured with the great wealth of the Holy Qur'an, far less to desire such worldly resources. It is also binding on him to remain always thankful to Allah for this great blessing. Hazrat Ibrahim (AS) desired very ardently this blessing for his father but it was not given to him.

Likewise, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) also desired the blessing of Eeman very much for his uncle Abu Talib but he could not get it.

As for the worldly wealth, property and resources, they are so cheap and worthless that these are granted in large

quantities to every faithless, Mulhid and Zindiq, the meanest class of the creatures. They are virtually drowned in these worldly riches Allah keeps far away from these worldly resources his Prophets, favourite servants and friends, etc who are the best class of the creation. These virtuous men have been protected so much from these worldly temptations that sometimes they have not even a morsal of food to eat, not a piece of cloth to cover their bodies. Exalted Allah lays an obligation on His favoured men for not having polluted them with these worthless materials of the world. Allah told Hazrat Moosa (AS) that if He so willed He could bestow on him (AS) so much wealth resources pomp and show that would frighten pharaoh and involve him in inferiority complex, but He did not do this. He kept Hazrat Moosa (AS) away from these worldly resources. This is how Exalted Allah deals with His favoured friends. He keeps them away from the worldly resources, just as a kind herdsman keeps his camels away from harmful places.

Allah does not follow this practice of depriving his favoured friends of the worldly resources, because they have no value in the sight of Allah. It is not so ; He does so to help them to get their full share in the Hereafter. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

وَلَوْلَا أَنْ يَكُونَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً لَجَعَلْنَا لِمَنْ يَكْفُرُ بِالرَّحْمٰنِ لِبُيُوتِهِمْ
سُقُفًا مِنْ فِضَّةٍ وَمَعَارِجَ عَلَيْهَا يَظْهَرُونَ ۝ وَلِبُيُوتِهِمْ أَبْوَابًا وَسُرُرًا عَلَيْهَا
يَتَّكِئُونَ. وَزُخْرُفًا ط وَإِنْ كُلُّ ذٰلِكَ لَمَّا مَتَاعُ الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا ط وَالْآخِرَةُ عِنْدَ
رَبِّكَ لِلْمُتَّقِينَ . (سورة الزخرف: ٣٣-٣٥)

And were it not that mankind would have become one community, We might well have appointed, for those who disbelieve in the Beneficent, roofs of silver for their houses and stairs (of silver) whereby to mount. And for their houses doors (of silver) and couches of

silver whereon to recline, and ornaments of gold. Yet , all that, would have been but a provision of the life of the world. And the Hereafter with your Lord would have been for those who are righteous. (43 : 33 - 35)

If you have any wisdom you can easily understand the difference between these two groups of men. You should be thankful to Exalted Allah that He has, by His mercy, bestowed on you the bounties which He bestows on His favourite and chosen servants and has saved you from the mischief and conspiracies of the enemies. It is necessary for you to always remain thankful to Allah for this sublime blessing of Islam. If it is beyond your thought to understand this point. Then try to understand by an example. If you were born on the day when this universe was created and live up to the Day of Judgement and remain always thanking Allah during this period, you cannot do full justice to your due of thankgiving.

Eeman (Faith) is such a sublime blessing that this small book cannot suffice for giving here its full details. In fact thousands of pages will not be enough for this purpose. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an, addressing the Holy Prophet (PBUH) :

مَا كُنْتَ تَدْرِىْ مَا الْكِتَابُ وَلَا الْإِيْمَانُ . (سورة الشورى:٥٦)

You did not know what is the scripture and what is Eeman (Faith). (42 : 52)

Allah further said :

وَعَلَّمَكَ مَا لَمْ تَكُنْ تَعْلَمُ وَكَانَ فَضْلُ اللهِ عَلَيْكَ عَظِيْمًا . (سورة النساء:١١٣)

He taught you that which you did not know and Allah's grace to you has been great. (4:113)

Then Allah said to the people :

بَلِ اللّٰهُ يَمُنُّ عَلَيْكُمْ اَنْ هَدَاكُمْ لِلْاِيْمَانِ . (سورة الحجرات : ١٧)

... But Allah does confer a favour on you inasmuch as He has guided you to the Faith. (49 : 17)

When the Holy Prophet (PBUH) heard a man saying : الحمد لله على الاسلام (Praise to Allah for Islam), he (PBUH) said : You have rendered thanks for a great blessing of Allah.

In the same way when the messenger of Hazrat Yusuf (AS) came to Hazrat Ya'qoob (AS) with a glad tidings, he asked the messenger to tell him on which Faith he left Hazrat Yusuf (AS) He replied that he had left him on the faith, of Islam. Having heard this reply, Hazrat Ya'qoob (AS) said : The blessing has now been completed on me.

A saint has said that the best words near Allah among the words of thanksgiving are

الحمد لله الذى أنعمَ علينا وهدينا للإسلام .

Praise be to Allah that He bestowed on us His favours and guided us to Islam.

My dear Brother, never be negligent in the matter of thanking Allah nor be proud that you are a Muslim have acquired some knowledge about Allah, have been enabled to do good and to refrain from sins. You should know that pride and negligence are not allowed in any circumstances, because the deeds depend on their final fate.

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) used to say that one who becomes certain and fearless about his Deen runs the risk of losing his Deen.

My Shaikh (RA) used to advise :

"When you hear that the disbelievers and the polytheists will be thrown into Hell-Fire and they will be exposed to eternal torment then seeing their fate do not forget your own self. This is because this path is full of doubts and apprehensions and the final fate is not known to anyone"

Hazrat Ali (RAA) is reported to have said :

After conferring favours on many persons Allah gives them respite and they remain in enticement . Many men remain in loss on account of eloquence of speech and many others remain deceived by Allah's attribute of concealing sins.

Someone asked Hazrat Zun-Noon of Egypt the factor whereby a man is deceived and falls into the grip of Allah. The Shaikh (RA) replied that it was Allah's mercy and forgiveness. That is what Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

سَنَسْتَدْرِجُهُمْ مِّنْ حَيْثُ لَا يَعْلَمُوْنَ . (سورة الاعراف : ١٨٢)

Step by step we lead them on from whence they do not know.

When you have attained the status of nearness to Exalted Allah, you should know that you have reached a very dangerous crossing, because it is very dangerous crossing, because it is very dangerous to fall down from a great height.

There is, therefore, no occasion at all to feel complacent on the favours of Exalted Allah, nor to be neglectful of thanksgiving, nor to give up humbleness and submissiveness before Allah.

Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) has said that there is no justification for us to feel complacent when Hazrat Ibrahim Khalilullah (AS) said, as reported in the Holy Qur'an;

وَاجْنُبْنِي وَبَنِيَّ أَنْ نَعْبُدَ الْأَصْنَامَ (سورة ابراهيم : ٣٥)

> ... and preserve me and my sons from worshipping idols. (12 : 101)

Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) has prayed to Allah saying:

> Lord! Save me, save me. The boat is in danger of being drowned, while you too are present in the boat.

A narrative of Muhammad bin Yusuf has reached me who used to say: One night I saw Hazrat Sufyan Sauri (RA) busy with his routine rehearsals with deep attention and concentration. He remained weeping bitterly the whole night. I asked him if he was weeping on his sins. Picking up a piece of straw he (RA) said : The sins are lighter than this in the sight of Allah. I am afraid, lest He should take away from me the blessing of Islam.

I have heard some scholars, saying that once a Prophet (AS) asked Allah why Bil'am Baa'ur was condemned even though he was a great saint with capacity work supernatural feats. Exalted Allah said: He never uttered a single word of thanks for my blessings, during his whole lifetime. If he had rendered the slightest thank to Me. I would not have snatched from him, his holiness, honour and his virtuous status.

So, O Man! You must remain alert and cautious and be thankful to Allah for His blessings and bounties that He bestowed on you His best blessing that is Islam and knowledge of Deen.

His least blessing is that a man should be telling Allah's sacred names on beads and should refrain four useless talks.

It is likely that in return for this thanksgiving Allah may save you from the bitterness of loss of blessings because disgrace following honour and disfame following nearness are bitterest draughts.

اَللّٰهُمَّ انّا نعوذبكَ من تحول عافيتك وزوالِ نِعمتك وفجاءة نقمتك.

SECTION 3

Now you have reflected deeply upon the bounties and the great favours of Exalted Allah which you cannot count and which are beyond your imagination. You have crossed difficult and complicated valleys and have acquired knowledge and insight. You have purified yourself from major and minor sins. You have steered clear of the valleys of obstacles and hindrances and have attained the forces of inducement and saved yourself from the factors of loss and ruin. Thus, you have now reached high stations of righteousness the initial stage of which is spiritual insight and divine knowledge and the final stage is the dignity and greatness of nearness to Allah.

Now you are called upon to ponder over this matter, using your intellect and to render thanks to Exalted Allah to the best of your ability. During this thanksgiving your tongue should remain engaged in singing Allah's praise and your heart concentrated on the Grandeur and Glory of Allah. All this should stop you from disobeying Allah and keep you ever

prepared for obeying Him. Whenever you find yourself slack and neglectful in the duty of thanksgiving, you must at once turn to Allah with prayer and weeping and make the following supplication to Him:

> O my Lord, Allah! You showered by your mercy, good and favour on me in the past although I did not deserve that. I pray to you to complete on me that good and favour of yours.

Call Exalted Allah as did call Him His friends - those who attained divine knowledge yet they remained fearing the possibility of their worship being rejected, the burning of being disgraced, being removed far away from the Lord and the loss of the favours done to them by Allah. They are righteous saints who entreat Allah in all submissiveness, submit their appeal most humbly to the Divine Court and in their seclusion and privacy, they pray to Allah loudly as mentioned in the Holy Qur'an :

رَبَّنَا لَا تُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ إِذْ هَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ . (سورة العمران : ٨)

> Our Lord ! Do not cause our hearts to go astray after you have guided us, and bestow upon us mercy from your presence. Surely, only You are the Bestower. (3 : 8)

In my opinion, the meaning of this verse is that we have received from You only blessing and hope to receive from You another blessing, because You are very Generous and You are a great Bestower. So complete this favour on us, by Your mercy, as You did in the past.

My dear ! The following is the first دعاء (supplication) which Allah taught His Muslim servants :

اِهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيْمَ . (سورة الفاتحة : ٥)

Show us the straight path. (1 : 5)

This is a prayer to Allah to keep us on the straight path and maintain us on that continuously and permanently. You should, therefore, be expressing your humbleness and submissiveness. This is because this path is fraught with many risks.

After pondering well on the matter, the wise men have come to the conclusion that the sources of troubles and distresses are five:

1. To fall ill during journeys;

2. To suffer from poverty during old age.

3. To face death during young age.

4. To lose the eyesight after having enjoyed a good eyesight.

5. To taste the bitterness of enmity from one who has been a friend in the past.

Some poet has expressed this point in a better way :

لكل شئ اذا فارقته عِوضٌ
وليس لله إن فارقت من عِوضٍ

There is a substitute for every thing that you
part with, but there is no substitute for Allah, if
you part with Him.

Therefore, it is necessary for you to render thanks to Allah and every blessing from Him, on your ability to take the

path of Deen, on crossing the valley of worship and on receiving His help and support. This will preserve what you have already been given and you may be given more than your wish.

If you act upon my advice you will be able to cross a very dangerous valley and will become the owner of two precious treasures :

1. The treasure of permanency i.e., the continuation and preservation of the blessings which you have already been granted and that they may not be lost.

2. The treasure that Allah may grant you in abundance the blessings which you have not received yet and you may remain quite sure that you will not be deprived of them.

Now you will enter the chosen group of the men of Deen and accomplished men with divine knowledge who are men of pious souls, disgusted with the world. They are men of Taqwa from head to feet, inflicting defeat on Satan, humble and submissive, having trust in Allah, resorting to Tafseer i.e. entrusting their affairs to Allah, pleased with Allah's will, patient and persevering, righteous, acting on the principle of Hope and fear, sincere in all matters, thankful to Allah for His favours. You will be counted among those who have found the right path of Deen

You will perhaps say that this is a very difficult matter and only a very few men may have succeeded in walking on this path. You should know that Exalted Allah has also said that in the Holy Qur'an :

وَقَلِيلٌ مِّنْ عِبَادِيَ الشَّكُورُ . (سورة سبا : ١٣)

(Only) a few of my servants are thankful. (34:13)

وَلٰكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَشْكُرُوْنَ . (سورة البقرة : ٢٤٣)

But most of mankind do not give thanks. (2:243)

All these problems become easy for those for whom Allah provides ease. Man is duty bound only to put in his efforts and work for this purpose. As regards, guidance, it depends on Allah's will. Allah has said :

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا . (سورة العنكبوت: ٦٩)

As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our paths. (29 : 69)

When a weak and helpless servant works hard in the path of Allah, what do you think about Merciful and All-Sufficient Allah? Will He not come to the rescue of this servant?

If you think that it is very difficult to cross all these difficult and arduous valleys when the people's ages are so short. This is true, but when Exalted Allah chooses some of His servants for His honour all these difficulties and obstacles become easy and short for him. After completing his journey on this path; the servant feels that the path was very easy and short.

Some people complete their journey on this path in seventy years, some in twenty years and still some in ten years. There are also people who complete this journey only in one year. There are some fortunate persons who complete the journey in a few moments with the special kindness and assistance of Allah.

The stories about the People of the cave (اصحاب کہف) and the magicians of Pharoah, are clear examples of this. Hazrat Ibrahim bin Adham (RA) was a King. He renounced his Kingdom in order to take the path of Allah. The time he took in reaching his goal was the time which a man takes in travelling from Balkh to Merv. When at a place he saw a man falling from a bridge into deep water, he made a sign, to stop the man from falling down and the man hanging in the air. Thus, he was saved from being drowned into the water.

Similarly, Hazrat Rabiah Basriyah (RA) was an aged slave girl. She was taken round for sale in the market of Basra, but none was prepared to purchase her on account of her old age. At last a merchant felt pity on her. He purchased her for one hundred Dirhams and set her free. After becoming free she took the path of worship and devotion. Not one year passed when famous Ulama and Mashaikh began to pay visits to her in honour of her spiritual high status.

If Allah does not show mercy to anyone and entrusts him to his self, he will be wandering about in these wild valleys without getting a way out even during the period of seventy years.

A question arises here. Why is it that one person receives Allah's special mercy but another person has been deprived of this mercy, although both are equal in the matter of worship and being servants of Allah? The answer comes from Allah that the people should try to know the secrets of being servants and should observe the etiquettes prescribed for the Divine court of Allah which is mentioned in this verse :

لَا يُسْئَلُ عَمَّا يَفْعَلُ وَهُمْ يُسْئَلُوْنَ . (سورة الانبياء : ٢٣)

He (Allah) will not be questioned about what He does but they will be questioned. (21 : 23)

I say that the example of this path is like the example of the bridge of Sirat and its valleys, and the different conditions of the people. Some persons will cross the Bridge like electric current, some like fast blowing wind, some like birds, some like pedestrians and some crawling and some will be such as will be burnt to coal on their way across the Bridge. Some will be thrown into Hell with pick-hooks.

Just like this is the path of worship in the world divided in two passages - the Sirat (path) of the world and the Sirat of the Hereafter.

The Sirat of the Hereafter is for the souls that they will view with their - own eyes its torments and terrors. The Sirat of the world is for the hearts. The people see its terrors and risks with their intellect and their inner insight. The different ways of crossing the Bridge of Sirat will be according to the difference in their conduct and behaviour in the world. So reflect deeply on this situation.

وا لله اعلم وبا لله التوفيق.

SECTION 4

You should know that this path in its width and length is not like the paths of the world which are travelled by walking with strength or weakness. This is a spiritual journey which is undertaken with the hearts. It is completed with the help of wisdom and thinking, belief and insight. Its basis is the celestial light and divine glance. If they fall on anyone, the secrets of the two worlds become clearly exposed to him.

Sometime that light is not available even after searching for it for one hundred years, because many mistakes and shortcomings are committed during its search. Sometimes this light is attained in fifty years, sometimes in ten years.

Some fortunate persons get it in one day rather only in one hour with the help of Allah Who is the Owner of the light. Despite all this, the servant of Allah has been commanded to strive in this path and he is to obey this command. The final result depends on the destiny and fate. You must have in your heart a firm belief that Allah is just ; He does whatever He wills and how He wills it.

You may say that this is a very difficult matter and the servant of Allah is in need of many things. What will be the object of all this labour and hard work?

I agree that it is quite true that the path has terrible risks. That is why Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

إِنَّا عَرَضْنَا الْأَمَانَةَ عَلَى السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالْجِبَالِ فَأَبَيْنَ أَنْ يَحْمِلْنَهَا وَأَشْفَقْنَ مِنْهَا وَحَمَلَهَا الْإِنْسَانُ إِنَّهُ كَانَ ظَلُومًا جَهُولًا . (سورة الاحزاب: ٧٢)

Indeed We offered the trust to the heavens and the earth and the hills, but they shrank from hearing it and were afraid of it and man assumed it. Surely, he has proved a tyrant and a fool. (33 : 72)

The Holy Prophet has also said in a Hadith:

لَوْ تَعْلَمُوْنَ ما أعلم لبكيتم كثيراً ولضحكتم قليلاً.

If you come to know what I know you will weep much and laugh little.

Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq (RAA) used to say:

"I like that I should have been a piece of grass that some animal would have eaten it."

This was due to the fear of punishment that he said this.

It is narrated from Hazrat Umar Farooq (RAA) that he heard someone reciting this verse of the Holy Qur'an :

هَلْ اَتٰى عَلَى الْاِنْسَانِ حِيْنٌ مِّنَ الدَّهْرِ لَمْ يَكُنْ شَيْئًا مَّذْكُوْرًا . (سورة الدهر: ١)

Has there come upon man (ever) any period of time in which he was nothing worth being mentioned. (76:1)

Hearing this Hazrat Umar (RAA) said.

"Would that life was completed in this condition!"

Hazrat Abu Ubaidah bin Jarrah (RAA) used to say :

I like that I would have been a ram in my house ; my flesh was distributed and my soup was drunk and that I was not born at all."

He (RAA) also said :

"I envy those who have not been born."

You are thinking that this is a very difficult task. Indeed, it is more difficult and risky than you can imagine. At any rate, this task was ordained in the knowledge of Allah in the very beginning of creation and it is that Great Knower of things Who has issued this programme and procedure.

A servant of Allah has, therefore, no alternative but to strive hard in his service and worship for Allah. He should rely on Allah and be always submissive and humble in His

presence, so that He may have mercy on him and save him from failure and ruin.

I reflected deeply on this subject that when a servant takes to devotion to and service for Allah and continues on this path the whole of his lifetime Exalted Allah grants him about forty types of favours. Twenty in this world and twenty in the Hereafter. These are as follows :

FIRST : Exalted Allah Himself praises the man. You can easily imagine the righteousness of the man who is the subject of Allah's praise.

SECOND : Exalted Allah thanks him and exalts him. Now think what a great source of honour and gain it is to be the target of Allah's praise and exaltations !

THIRD : Exalted Allah loves him. What a great boon and honour it is for a man to be the beloved of Allah !

FOURTH : Exalted Allah takes the responsibility to solve all his problems and difficulties.

FIFTH : Exalted Allah arranges that his sustenance should reach him without any work, search or anxiety on his part.

SIXTH : Exalted Allah becomes his helper and protector against every opponent and enemy.

SEVENTH : Exalted Allah keeps the heart of the man well pleased and contented.

EIGHTH : Allah confers on him such honour and satus that he is saved from the disgrace of serving the world and the people of the world. Moreover, he does not like even the rulers and the dignitaries, of the world to serve him.

NINTH : Allah makes him magnanimous and courageous. He does not get polluted with the filth and pollution of the owrld or of its people, nor does he take heed of their conduct and recreative activities, just as wise men ignore the foolish activities of the children, men and women.

TENTH : Allah Almighty bestows on him the contentment of the heart. He remains in the world at a very high level of self-respect. His magnanimity is not affected by an accident or by his deprivation of anything.

ELEVENTH : Exalted Allah grants him the light of the heart whereby he has access to the secret of matters, to which others have no access despite their efforts and hard work.

TWELFTH : Allah bestows on him farsight and ambition. He is not at all disturbed by the vicissitudes of the times, nor is he disgusted with the ill treatment and misbehavior of the people, nor with their evil designs.

THIRTEENTH : Exalted Allah establishes in the hearts of others the fear and awe of him. All good and bad men respect him and the despots of the time remain afraid of him.

FOURTEENTH : Allah creates his love in the hearts of the people. Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

سَيَجْعَلُ لَهُمُ الرَّحْمٰنُ وُدًّا . (سورة مريم : ٩٦)

The Beneficent (Allah) shall appoint for them love. (19 : 96)

FIFTEENTH : Blessing is created in all his possession, viz., his speech, his deeds, his clothes and his house. The people regard as something very sacred the ground on which he walks or the place where he stays a day or so.

SIXTEENTH : The entire land and the seas of the world become obedient to him. If he desires to wa'k on water or in the space he can do this. He possesses the capacity of covering the entire globe in an hour only.

SEVENTEENTH : All living animals, beasts birds, etc. become obedient to him.

EIGHTEENTH : He becomes the owner of the treasurers of the world. Wherever he puts his hand he finds treasure and wherever he puts his feet, water gushes out form there. Wherever he turns he finds all sorts of nice food.

NINETEENTH : Allah grants him such place in His court that people take him as an intermediary for the fulfilment of their needs.

TWENTIETH : His prayer is accepted in the Divine Court and he gets whatever he prays for. If he intercedes for anyone his intercession is accepted. Similarly if he takes an oath Exalted Allah vindicates his oath. Even the mountain moves from its base at his beckoning. Whenever a wish arises in his heart Allah fulfils it without asking for it on his part.

These twenty blessings are the examples of worldly blessings honour and grace. The remaining twenty blessings mentioned below relate to the Hereafter.

TWENTY - FIRST : The agony of death, from which the Prophets (AS) also sought refuge, is made easy for him. For some people the taste of death is so welcome as a draught of water is for a thirsty person. It occurs in the Holy Qur'an :

تَتَوَفَّاهُمُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ طَيِّبِيْنَ . (سورة النحل : ٣٢)

The Angels take out their souls, while these are in a state of piety. (16 : 32)

TWENTY - SECOND : The blessings Divine knowledge and Eeman remain safe and secure for them. These are blessings for the attainment of which all sorts of hardships distress torture and grief are borne. Exalted Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

يُثَبِّتُ اللّٰهُ الَّذِيْنَ اٰمَنُوْا بِالْقَوْلِ الثَّابِتِ فِى الْحَيٰوةِ الدُّنْيَا وَفِى الْاٰخِرَةِ . (سورة ابراهيم : ٢٧)

Allah confirms those who believe, by a firm saying, in the life of the world and in the Hereafter. (14 : 27)

TWENTY - THIRD : He is provided comfort and peace at the time of death and will be given the glad tidings of admission into Paradise with peace and contentment. It has been said in the Holy Qur'an :

لَاتَخَافُوْا وَلَا تَحْزَنُوْا وَاَبْشِرُوْا بِالْجَنَّةِ الَّتِى كُنْتُمْ تُوْعَدُوْنَ . (سورة الصافات : ٣٠)

Do not fear nor grieve, but hear glad tidings of Paradise which you are promised. (41 : 30)

Now he will have no fear about the tortures of the Hereafter, nor grief on leaving behind the favours and comforts of the world.

TWENTY - FOURTH : He will be favoured with the bliss of eternal life in Paradise.

TWENTY - FIFTH : At the time of death his soul will be illuminated and he will be honoured and Exalted in the presence of the Angels. As regards his apparent condition, his body will be handled with due esteem and regard and taken to the graveyard on the shoulders of men assembled to pay respect to his funeral. A large number of Muslims will take

part in his funeral prayer as a great mark of respect for the dead as well as for themselves. People compete with one another to level their shoulders to his funeral.

TWENTY - SIXTH : His grave is made spacious and illuminated .

TWENTY - SEVENTH : He will be secure from the trial of questioning in the grave. The correct answers will be inspired to him.

TWENTY - EIGHTH : He shall be resurrected on the Day of Resurrection with great honour, and with crown and throne.

TWENTY - NINTH : Necessary provision shall be made to please his sons.

THIRTIETH : His face will be made illuminated and shining. It occurs in the Holy Qur'an :

وُجُوْهٌ يَّوْمَئِذٍ مُّسْفِرَةٌ ضَاحِكَةٌ مُّسْتَبْشِرَةٌ. (سورة عبس:٣٨-٣٩)

On that day faces will be bright laughing, rejoicing at glad tidings. (80 : 38 - 39)

THIRTY - FIRST : He will be protected from the horrors and torments of the Day of Judgement. It occurs in the Holy Qur'an :

اَفَمَنْ يُّلْقٰى فِى النَّارِ خَيْرٌ اَمْ مَّنْ يَّاْتِىْٓ اٰمِنًا يَّوْمَ الْقِيٰمَةِ ط (سورة : ٤٠)

Is he who is hurled into the Fire better or he who comes secure on the Day of Resurrection?

THIRTY - SECOND : The Register of Deeds will be handed over on the Day of Judgement in their right hands.

Some among them will be such as will be exempt from reckoning and from the service of a Register of Deeds.

THIRTY - THIRD : There will be some whose reckoning will be made easy for them and there will be some who will not be subjected to any reckoning at all.

THIRTY - FOURTH : At the time of weighing of the deeds the scale of the good deeds will be heavier than that of the bad deeds.

THIRTY - FIFTH : He will be given from the pool of Kausar of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) pure water after drinking which he shall never feel thirsty.

THIRTY - SIXTH : He shall cross over the Bridge of Sirat safe and secure and will be saved from Hell.

THIRTY - SEVENTH : He will have the authority of interceding for others on the plain of Resurrection, just like the Prophets of Allah (A.S.).

THIRTY - EIGHTH : He will get in Paradise eternal Kingdom and everlasting blessings.

THIRTY - NINTH : He will be favoured with the honour of enjoying Allah's pleasure and appreciation.

FORTIETH : He will have the greatest blessing of seeing Exalted Allah, the object of the worship of the entire creation from Eternity to Infinity, Who has neither physical shape nor symptoms.

I have given here this number (40) according to my poor understanding with very a brief description of each as elaboration would require larger space for this. For example, I have described the Eternal Kingdom as one blessing. If I was

to describe this in detail it would exceed the description of these blessings the remaining palaces and robes excluded. Again, the details of each of these are so varied and vast that none but only the Knower of the unseen Allah knows them. The Holy Qur'an declares :

فَلَا تَعْلَمُ نَفْسٌ مَّا أُخْفِيَ لَهُم مِّن قُرَّةِ أَعْيُنٍ جَزَاءً بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ (سورة السجدة : ١٧)

No soul knows what is kept concealed for them of joy as a reward for what they used to do. (32 : 17)

The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said in a Hadith : Paradise has been equipped and furnished with blessing which neither an eye has seen nor has an ear heard about them, nor has an idea about them occurred to anyone's heart.

Allah has said in the Holy Qur'an :

لَنَفِدَ الْبَحْرُ قَبْلَ أَن تَنفَدَ كَلِمَاتُ رَبِّي (سورة الكهف : ١٠٩)

(If the sea became ink for writing down the words of my Lord) the sea would surely get exhausted before the exhaustion of the words of my Lord. (18 : 109)

The commentators of Holy Qur'an have said that the words mentioned in this verse are those which Exalted Allah shall speak to the inmates of Paradise of their pleasure and recreation.

When this is the condition of Paradise it is not possible for anyone to know even one millionth part of its blessings.

It is necessary to attain this great blessing that those who have courage should strive and those who have knowledge and earning should work for them. You should know that a servant stands in need of four qualities :

(1) Knowledge.
(2) Labour and action.
(3) Sincerity.
(4) Fear.

It is necessary for a servant of Allah first of all to determine the course of action and this is possible only with the help of knowledge. Seeking the course of action without knowledge will be nothing more than groping in the dark. Therefore he should act upon the demands of knowledge, without action he will make no headway. Whatever actions he takes should be exclusively for the pleasure of Allah. Action without sincerity shall do him no good, but may do him harm. Thereafter, he should always remain in fear about the acceptability or otherwise of his action. Without the dose of fear he will be susceptible of deception.

Hazrat Zun-noon of Egypt has said, and quite rightly :

> All men among the creation are dead, except the learned ones. Among the learned all are sleeping, except those who are in action. Among those who are in action are all under deception except those who are sincere in their actions. Even these sincere workers are labouring under a state of great risk.

I feel surprised about the condition of four categories of men.

1. A wise but ignorant person who does not try to find out the solutions to the problems which he is confronting, nor is he preparing for the life after death. He should study and consider the relevant proofs and arguments and reflect deeply on the warnings contained in the Quranic verses. Exalted Allah has said in a verse :

أَوَلَمْ يَنظُرُوا فِي مَلَكُوتِ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا خَلَقَ اللَّهُ مِن شَيْءٍ .
(سورة الاعراف : ١٨٥)

Have they not considered the dominion of the heavens and the earth - and what Allah has created ... (7 : 185)

At another place Allah has said :

أَلَا يَظُنُّ أُولَٰئِكَ أَنَّهُم مَّبْعُوثُونَ لِيَوْمٍ عَظِيمٍ . (سورة المطففين: ٤)

Do such (people) not consider that they will be raised up again on a Great Day (of Judgement)?

2 Next come those learned men who do not act upon their knowledge of the various difficulties and valleys standing in their way yet they are taking no heed of these difficulties.

3 The third is that worker who is devoid of sincerity in his actions and does not reflect on this command of Exalted Allah :

فَمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا لِقَاءَ رَبِّهِ فَلْيَعْمَلْ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا وَلَا يُشْرِكْ بِعِبَادَةِ رَبِّهِ أَحَدًا . (سورة الكهف: ١١٠)

And whoever hopes for the meeting with his Lord, let him do righteous work and ascribe no partner in the worship of his Lord. (18:110)

4 The fourth is that man who is sincere in his work but is devoid of fear about his deeds. He does not care to keep in view how Allah deals with His favourite servants (the Prophets - AS) who are appointed to guide Allah's creation on the right path. Addressing the last of the Prophets, Muhammad (PBUH), the most beloved personality near Allah among His servants, He has said :

وَلَقَدْ أُوحِيَ إِلَيْكَ وَإِلَى الَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكَ لَئِنْ أَشْرَكْتَ لَيَحْبَطَنَّ عَمَلُكَ وَلَتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ . (سورة الزمر.٦٥)

And surely, it has been revealed to you as (was revealed) to those who were before you that if you ascribe a partner (to Allah) your work will go waste and you will indeed be among the losers. (39 : 65)

There are similar other verses on the subject. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) has said :

The Surah 11 - Hood and its sister surahs, 101- Al - Qariyah and 69 - Al - Haqqah, have made me old.

In short, Exalted Allah has mentioned all these points in His Holy Book in the following four verses :

أَفَحَسِبْتُمْ أَنَّمَا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ عَبَثًا وَأَنَّكُمْ إِلَيْنَا لَا تُرْجَعُونَ . (سورة المؤمنون:١١٥)

Do you then think that We have created you in vain and that you will not be returned to Us? (23 : 115)

وَلْتَنظُرْ نَفْسٌ مَّا قَدَّمَتْ لِغَدٍ وَّاتَّقُوا اللّٰهَ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ خَبِيْرٌ بِمَا تَعْمَلُوْنَ . (سورة الحشر : ١٨)

And let every soul look to that which it sends on before for the morrow. And fear Allah, Allah is indeed Aware of what you do. (59:18)

Exalted Allah has said at another place:

وَالَّذِيْنَ جَاهَدُوْا فِيْنَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَاِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِيْنَ . (سورة العنكبوت : ٦٩)

As for those who strive in Us, We surely guide them to Our Paths and surely Allah is with those who do good. (29 : 69)

Exalted Allah has summarized all these points in this verse :

وَمَنْ جَاهَدَ فَاِنَّمَا يُجَاهِدُ لِنَفْسِهٖ اِنَّ اللّٰهَ لَغَنِيٌّ عَنِ الْعَالَمِيْنَ . (سورة العنكبوت:٦)

And whosoever strives, strives only for himself, and Allah is, indeed, Independent of the worlds. (29 : 6)

CONCLUSION

I seek Allah's forgiveness for any mistakes or excesses that I may have committed in the compilation of this book.

I also seek Allah's forgiveness for statements that are unsuitable, for my claim to possess the knowledge, of Deen and for disclosing this, despite its defects, for the occurrence in my heart of any notion of ostentation and show in the compilation of any book or in delivering any lectures or sermons.

We pray to Exalted Allah that may He help us all to act upon what we have learnt, that we may remain worshipping only this One Allah and that may He not make our knowledge a curse on us, but may put it in the scale of our good deeds on the Day when our deeds will be returned to us.

انّهٗ جوّادٌ كريمٌ

(He is indeed Generous and Merciful.)

This entire compilation is a discussion about the ways of walking on the path of the Hereafter.

الحمد لله الّذى بنعمته تتمُّ الصالحات و صلّى الله علىٰ رسوله الخاتم وآلهٖ وصحبهٖ وسلّم تسليما كثيراً .

والله حسبى ونعم الوكيل ولا حول ولا قوة الا بالله العلى العظيم